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THE
WORKS

Of the LEARNED

Isaac Barrow, D.D.

Late Master of Trinity College in Cambridge.

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His Grace Dr. JOHN TILLOTSON,

Late Lord Arch-Bishop of Canterbury.

The Second Volume.
CONTAINING
SERMONS and EXPOSITIONS

Upon all the

ARTICLES

IN

The Apostles Creed.

The THIRD EDITION, CORRECTED.

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To. the King.

SIR,



Most humbly present to Your Majesty a *Work*, the Author whereof, my Son, was much the more dear to me for his constant and exemplary Loyalty. Not only the general obligation of a Subject always engaged him to Your Majesty's Service, but the particular favours wherewith You were pleased to honour and encourage his Studies, might probably have induc'd him to a Dedication of this kind, if his modesty would have let him think any thing of his worthy Your Majesty's Patronage. This, which I here offer, is, by those who are better able to judge of it than my self, valued as the most considerable of his productions: But it chiefly presumes to entitle it self to Your Royal Protection, because it is an *Explication and Vindication* of that Christian Faith, whereof Your Majesty is the great Defender.

And, Sir, I beg leave to take this opportunity to make as publick an acknowledgment as I can, of that great goodness Your Majesty has shewn in the acceptance and recompence of the fidelity I have through a course of many years born to the Cause of Your Majesty and your Royal Father.

Long may Your Majesty live and Reign under the happy conduct and blessing of that wisdom, in whose right hand is length of days, and in her left hand Riches and Honour. I am,

May it please your Majesty,

Your Majesty's most Humble,

Faithful and Obedient

Subject and Servant,

THOMAS BARROW.

The Creed.

I Believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth:

And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, Born of the virgin Mary, Suffered under Pontius Pilate, Was Crucified, dead and buried, He descended into Hell; The third day he rose again from the dead, He ascended into Heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost; The holy Catholick Church; The Communion of Saints; The forgiveness of sins; The resurrection of the body; And the life everlasting. Amen.

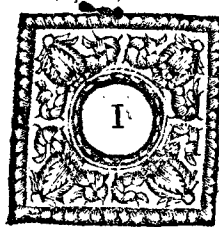
THE
CHRISTIAN FAITH
Explained and Vindicated,
In several
SERMONS
UPON THE
Chief Articles of it contained in the
APOSTLES CREED.

I Believe, &c.

SERMON I.
Of the Evil and Unreasonableness of
INFIDELITY.

H E B. iii. 12.

Take heed, Brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief.



IF the causes of all the sin and all the mischief in the world were carefully sought, we should find the chief of all to be Infidelity; either total or gradual. Wherefore to dehort and dissuade from it, is a very profitable design; and this, with God's assistance, I shall endeavour from these words; in which, two particulars naturally do offer themselves to our observation; an assertion implied, that Infidelity is a sinful distemper of heart; and a duty recommended, that we be careful to void, or correct that distemper; of these to declare the one, and to press the other, shall be the scope of my discourse.

That Infidelity is a sinful distemper of heart, appeareth by divers express testimonies of Scripture, and by many good reasons grounded thereon.

It is by our Saviour in terms called *Sin*; *when he is come, he will reprove the world of Sin*. — *Of Sin, because they believe not in me*: and, *If I had not come, and spoken unto them, they had not had sin; but now they have no cloke for their sin*; and, *If ye were blind, ye should not have had sin; but now ye say, we see, therefore your sin abideth*. What sin? that of Infidelity, for which they were culpable, having

Joh. 16. 8, 9.
John 15. 22.
9. 41.
John 8. 24.
John 9. 41.

having such powerful means and arguments to believe, imparted to them, without due effect.

It hath a Condemnation grounded thereon: *He* (saith our Saviour) *that believeth not, is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God*; but Condemnation ever doth suppose faultiness.

ἡ ἐντολὴ τῆς Χρείας, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ ἀπιστεῖν αὐταῖς χαλεπωτέρῳ ἐπάγει τὴν κόλασιν. Chrys. ad Demat. Tom. 6. p. 140.

It hath fore punishment denounced thereto; *God* (saith St. Paul) *shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lye, that they all might be damned, who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness*; and, Our Lord (saith he) at his coming to judgment, *will take vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ*; whence among those, who have their part in the lake burning with fire and brimstone, the fearful, and unbelievers (that is, they who fear to profess, or refuse to believe the Christian Doctrine) are reckoned in the first place; which implyeth Infidelity to be a heinous sin.

It is also such, because it is a *transgression* of a principal Law, or divine Command; *this* (saith St. John) *is the command of him that we should believe*; *this* (saith our Lord) *is the signal work of God* (which God requireth of us) *that ye believe on him, whom he hath sent*; that was a duty, which our Lord and his Apostles chiefly did teach, injoin and press; wherefore correspondently Infidelity is a great sin; according to St. John's notion, that *sin is ἀνομία, the transgression of a Law*.

But the sinfulness of Infidelity will appear more fully by considering its nature and ingredients; its causes; its properties and adjuncts; its effects and consequences.

I. In its nature it doth involve an affected blindness and ignorance of the noblest and most useful truths; a bad use of reason, and most culpable imprudence; disregard of God's providence; or despight thereto; abuse of his grace; bad opinions of him, and bad affections toward him; for,

God in exceeding goodness and kindness to mankind hath proposed a doctrine, in it self *faithful, and worthy of all acceptation*; containing most excellent truths instructive of our mind, and directive of our practice, toward attainment of Salvation and Eternal felicity: *special overtures of mercy and grace* most needful to us in our state of *sinful guilt, of weakness, of wretchedness*; high encouragements and rich promises of reward for obedience; such a doctrine with all its benefits, Infidelity doth reject, *defeating the counsel of God, crossing his earnest desires of our welfare, despising his goodness, and patience*.

Luke 7. 30. Matt. 23. 37. 1 Tim. 2. 4. Luke 16. 16. Rom. 2. 4. 2 Pet. 3. 9, 15.

To this doctrine God hath yielded manifold clear attestations, declaring it to proceed from himself; ancient presignifications and predictions; audible voices and visible apparitions from heaven, innumerable miraculous works, providence concurring to the maintenance and propagation of it against most powerful oppositions and disadvantages; but all these testimonies Infidelity slighteth, not fearing to give their Author the lye, which wicked boldness St. John chargeth on it; *He* (saith the Apostle) *that believeth not God, hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the testimony that God gave of his Son*.

Many plain arguments, sufficient to convince our minds, and win our belief, God hath furnished; the dictates of natural conscience, the testimony of experience, the records of history, the consent of the best and wisest Men, do all conspire to prove the truth, to recommend the usefulness of this Doctrine; but Infidelity will not regard, will not weigh, will not yield to reason.

God by his providence doth offer means and motives, inducing to belief, by the promulgation of his Gospel, and exhortation of his Ministers: but such methods Infidelity doth void and frustrate; *thrusting away the word, turning away the ear from the truth, letting the seed fall beside us, casting away the Law of the Lord of hosts*; in effect (as those in Job) *Saying to God, depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways*.

2 Cor. 5. 20. Acts 13. 46. 2 Tim. 4. 4. Matt. 13. 12. Isa. 5. 24. Job 21. 14. 2 Cor. 4. 16.

God by his grace *doth shine upon our hearts*, doth attract our wills to compliance with his will, doth excite our affections to relish his truth; but Infidelity doth *resist his Spirit*, doth quench the heavenly light, doth smother all the suggestions and motions of divine Grace within us.

What God asserteth, Infidelity denieth, questioning his veracity: what God commandeth, Infidelity doth not approve, contesting his wisdom; what God promiseth, Infidelity will not confide in, distrusting his fidelity, or his power: Such is its behaviour (so injurious, so rude, so foolish) toward God, and his truth; this briefly is its nature; manifestly involving great pravity, iniquity and impiety.

II. The causes and sources from whence it springeth (touched in Scripture, and obvious to experience) are those which follow.

1. It commonly doth proceed from negligence, or drowsy inobservance and carelessness; when men being possessed with a *spirit of slumber*, or being amused with secular entertainments, do not mind the concerns of their Soul, or regard the means by God's merciful care presented for their conversion; being in regard to religious matters of *Gallio's humour*, *caring for none of those things*; thus, when the King in the Gospel sent to invite Persons to his wedding-feast, it is said, Of *ἀμελῶσαντες ἀπὸ τοῦ βασιλέως*, they being *careless*, or *not regarding it*, went their ways, one to his field, another to his trade. Of such the Apostle to the Hebrews saith, *How shall we escape, τοιαύτης ἀμελῶσαντες σωτηρίας*, who regard not so great salvation, exhibited to us? Of such Wisdom complaineth; *I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded. No man*; the greatest part indeed of men are upon this account Infidels, for that being wholly taken up in pursuit of worldly affairs and diversions, in amassing of wealth, in driving on projects of ambition, in enjoying sensual pleasures, in gratifying their fancy and humour with vain curiosities, or sports, they can hardly lend an ear to instruction; so they become unacquainted with the notions of Christian doctrine; the which to them are as *the seed falling by the way side*, which those *fowls of the air* do snatch and devour before it sinketh down into the earth, or doth come under consideration. Hence is unbelief commonly termed *not hearing God's voice*, *not hearkning to God's word*, the din of worldly business rendring men deaf to divine suggestions.

2. Another source of Infidelity is sloth, which indisposeth men to undergo the fatigue of seriously attending to the doctrine propounded, of examining its grounds, of weighing the reasons inducing to believe; whence at first hearing, if the notions hap not to hit their fancy, they do slight it before they fully understand it, or know its grounds; thence at least they must needs fail of a firm and steady belief, the which can alone be founded on a clear apprehension of the matter, and perception of its agreeableness to reason: So when the *Athenians*, did hear St. Paul declaring the grand points of faith, somewhat in his discourse, uncouth to their conceit, falling from him, some of them did scorn, others did neglect his doctrine; *Some mocked, others said we will hear thee again of this matter*: So Agrippa was almost persuaded to be a Christian, but had not the industry to prosecute his inquiry, till he arrived to a full satisfaction. A solid faith, (with clear understanding and firm persuasion) doth indeed, no less than any science, require sedulous and persevering study; so that as a man can never be learned, who will not be studious; so a sluggard cannot prove a good believer.

3. Infidelity doth arise from stupidity, or dulness of apprehension (I mean not that which is natural, for any man in his senses, how low soever otherwise in parts of improvements, is capable to understand the Christian doctrine, and to perceive reason sufficient to convince him of its truth, but) contracted by voluntary indispositions and defects; a stupidity arising from mists of prejudice, from steams of lust and passion, from rust grown on the mind by want of exercising it in observing and comparing things; whence men cannot apprehend the clearest notions plainly represented to them, nor discern the force of arguments however evident and cogent; but are like those wizards in Job, who *meet with darkness in the day time, and grope at noon day, as in the night*.

This is that, which is so often charged on the Jews as cause of their Infidelity; who *did hear but not understand, and did see but not perceive; because their heart was gross, and their ears were dull of hearing, and their eyes were closed*; this is that *πᾶσις καὶ ὁὐκ*, that numbness of heart, which is represented as the common obstruction to the perception and admission of our

Lord's doctrine; this our Lord blamed in his own Disciples, when he rebuked them thus; *O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the Prophets have spoken.*

Of this the Apostle doth complain, telling the *Hebrews*, that they were incapable of improvement in knowledge, because they were *ᾠθεῖται ταῖς ἀνοαῖς*, *dull of hearing*, for want of skill and use, *not having their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.* There is indeed to a sound and robust faith required a good perspicacy of apprehension, a penetrancy of judgment, a vigour and quickness of mind, grounded in the purity of our faculties, and confirmed by exercise of them in consideration of spiritual things.

4. Another cause of Infidelity is a bad judgment, corrupted with prejudicate notions, and partial inclinations to falshood. Men are apt to entertain prejudices favourable to their natural appetites and humours, to their lusts, to their present interests; dictating to them, that wealth, dignity, fame, pleasure, ease, are things most desirable, and necessary ingredients of happiness; so that it is a sad thing in any case to want them; all men have strong inclinations biasing them toward such things, it is a hard thing to shake off such prejudices, and to check such inclinations; it is therefore not easy to entertain a doctrine representing such things indifferent, obliging us sometimes to reject them, always to be moderate in the pursuit and enjoyment of them; wherefore Infidelity will naturally spring up in a mind not cleansed from those corruptions of judgment.

5. Another source of Infidelity is perverseness of Will, which hindereth men from entertaining notions disagreeable to their fond, or froward humour: *ὡς γενεὰ ἀπίστος καὶ διεσπασμένη*, *O faithless and perverse generation*, those Epithets are well coupled, for he that is perverse will be faithless; in proportion to the one the other bad quality will prevail. *The weapons of the Apostolical warfare* (against the Infidel world) *were*, as St. Paul telleth us, *mighty to the casting down of strong holds*: So it was; and the Apostles by their discourse and demeanour effectually did force many a strong fortress to surrender: *but the will of some men is an impregnable bulwark against all batteries of discourse*; they are so invincibly stubborn, as to hold out against the clearest evidence, and mightiest force of reason; if they do not like what you say, if it cross any humour of theirs, be it clear as day, be it firm as an Adamant, they will not admit it; you shall not persuade them, tho' you do persuade them. Such was the temper of the Jews, whom St. Stephen therefore calleth *a stiff-necked People, uncircumcised in heart and ears*; who although they did hear the most winning discourse that ever was uttered, although they saw the most admirable works that ever were performed, yet would they not yield to the doctrine; the mean garb of the persons teaching it, the Spirituality of its design, the strict goodness of its precepts, and the like considerations, not forting with their fancies and desires; they hoping for a *Messias*, arrayed with gay appearances of external grandeur and splendour; whose chief work it should be to settle their Nation in a state of worldly prosperity and glory.

6. This is that hardness of heart, which is so often represented as an obstruction of belief: this hindred *Pharaoh*, notwithstanding all those mighty works performed before him, from *hearkning* to God's word, and regarding the mischiefs threatned to come on him for his disobedience; *I will not* (said he) *let Israel go*: His will was his reason, which no persuasion, no judgment could subdue. This was the cause of that monstrous Infidelity in the *Israelites*, which baffled all the methods, which God used to persuade and convert them: *Notwithstanding* (tis said) *they would not hear, but hardened their necks, like to the neck of their fathers, that did not believe in the Lord their God*: Whence that exhortation to them, *To day if you will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.* And to obduration the disbelief of the Gospel upon the Apostles preaching is in like manner ascribed; St. Paul (tis said in the *Acts*) *went into the Synagogue, and spake boldly for the space of three months, disputing and persuading the things concerning*

cerning the Kingdom of God: But divers were hardened and believed not; And, ^{Heb. 3. 12, 13. Vid. Mark 16. 14.} Exhort one another daily (saith the Apostle) lest any of you be hardened (in unbelief) through the deceitfulness of sin.

7. Of kin to that perverseness of heart is that squeamish delicacy and niceness of humour, which will not let men entertain or favour any thing, any wise seeming hard or harsh to them, if they cannot presently comprehend all that is said, if they can frame any cavil, or little exception against it, if every scruple be not avoided, if any thing be required distasteful to their sense; they are offended, and their faith is choaked; you must, to satisfy them, ^{Ira. 30. 10.} speak to them smooth things, which no wise grate on their conceit, or pleasure: So when our Lord discoursed somewhat mysteriously, representing himself in the ^{John 6. 63.} figure of heavenly bread (typified by the Manna of old) given for the World, to sustain men in life; ^{John 6. 60, 66.} Many of his disciples hearing this, said, this is a hard saying, who can hear it? and — from that time many of his disciples went back, ^{John 6. 61.} and walked no more with him; this is that which is called being — scandalized ^{Matt. 11. 6.} at the word; and stumbling at it; concerning which our Saviour saith, ^{24. 10. 13. 21. 1 Pet. 2. 8.} Blessed is he, whoever shall not be offended in me.

In regard to this weakness, the Apostles were fain in their Instructions to use prudent dispensation, proposing only to some persons the most easie points of Doctrine, they not being able to digest such as were more tough and difficult: ^{1 Cor. 3. 2.} I have (saith St. Paul) fed you with milk, and not with meat; for hitherto ye were not able to bear it — for ye are yet carnal; and Ye (saith the Apostle to the Hebrews) ^{A. Heb. 5. 12.} are such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.

Such were even the Apostles themselves in their minority; ^{Matt. 16. 23.} not savouring the things of God; being offended at our Lord's discourses, when he spake to them ^{Matt. 26. 31.} of suffering; and with his condition, when he entered into it.

8. With these dispositions is connected a want of love to truth; the which if a man hath not, he cannot well entertain such notions as the Gospel propoundeth, being no wise grateful to carnal sense and appetite: This cause St. Paul doth assign of the Pagan Doctors falling into so gross errors and vices, ^{Rom. 1. 28.} because they did not like to retain God in their knowledge; and of mens revolting from Christian Truth to Antichristian Imposture — ^{2 Thes. 2. 11.} because they received not the love of truth, that they might be saved: For which cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: Nothing indeed, but an impartial and ingenuous love of truth (over-balancing all corrupt prejudices and affections) can engage a man heartily to embrace this holy and pure Doctrine, can preserve a man in a firm adherence thereto.

9. A grand cause of Infidelity is pride, the which doth interpose various bars to the admission of Christian truth; for before a man can believe, ^{2 Cor. 10. 5.} every height (every towering imagination and conceit) that exalteth it self against the knowledge of God, must be cast down.

Pride fills a man with vanity, and an affectation of seeming wise in special manner above others, thereby disposing him to maintain Paradoxes, and to nauseate common truths receiv'd and believ'd by the generality of mankind.

A proud man is ever averse from renouncing his prejudices, and correcting his errors, doing which implieth a confession of weakness, ignorance and folly, consequently depresseth him in his own conceit, and seemeth to impair that credit, which he had with others from his wisdom; neither of which events he is able to endure.

He that is wise in his own conceit, will hug that conceit, and thence is incapable to learn; ^{Prov. 26. 12.} there is, saith Solomon, more hope of a fool than of him; and He that affecteth the praise of men, will not easily part with it for the sake of truth: whence, ^{John 5. 44. 12. 43.} How (saith our Lord) can ye believe, who receive glory one of another? how can ye, retaining such affections, be disposed to avow your selves to have been ignorants and fools, when as ye were reputed for learned and wise? how can ye endure to become Novices, who did pass for Doctors? how can ye allow your selves so blind and weak, as to have been deceived in your former judgment of things?

He that is conceited of his own wisdom, strength of parts, and improvement in knowledge cannot submit his mind to notions, which he cannot easily com-

comprehend and penetrate; he will scorn to have his understanding baffled or puzzled by sublime mysteries of Faith; he will not easily yield any thing too high for his wit to reach, or too knotty for him to unloose: *How can these things be?* what reason can there be for this? I cannot see how this can be true: this point is not intelligible; so he treateth the dictates of Faith; not considering the feebleness and shallowness of his own reason: Hence *not many wise men according to the flesh* (or who were conceited of their own wisdom, relying upon their natural faculties and means of knowledge) *not many Scribes, or disputers of this world* did imbrace the Christian Truth, it appearing absurd and foolish to them; it being needful, that a man should *be a fool, that he might* (in this regard) *become wise*.

The prime notions of Christianity do also tend to the debasing humane conceit, and to the exclusion of all glorying in our selves; referring all to the praise and glory of God, ascribing all to his pure mercy, bounty and grace: It representeth all men heinous sinners, void of all worth and merit, lapsed into a wretched state, altogether impotent, forlorn, and destitute of ability to help or relieve themselves; such notions proud hearts cannot digest; they cannot like to avow their infirmities, their defects, their wants, their vileness, and unworthiness; their distresses and miseries; they cannot endure to be entirely and absolutely beholden to favour and mercy for their happiness; such was the case of the *Jews*; who could not believe, because — *going about to establish their own righteousness, they would not submit to the righteousness of God*. *Dextra mihi Deus*; every proud man would say, with the prophane *Mezentius*.

Christianity doth also much disparage and vilifie those things, for which men are apt much to prize and pride themselves; it maketh small account of wealth, of honour, of power, of wit, of secular wisdom, of any humane excellency or worldly advantage: It levelleth the Rich and the Poor, the Prince and the Peasant, the Philosopher and Idiot in spiritual regards; yea far preferreth the meanest and simplest person, endued with true Piety, above the mightiest and wealthiest, who is devoid thereof: In the eye of it, *The righteous is more excellent than his neighbour*, whatever he be in worldly regard or state: This a proud man cannot support; to be divested of his imaginary privileges, to be thrown down from his perch of eminency, to be set below those, whom he so much despiseth, is insupportable to his Spirit.

The practice of Christianity doth also expose men to the scorn, and censure of prophane men; who for their own solace, out of envy, revenge, diabolical spite, are apt to deride and reproach all conscientious, and resolute practisers of their duty, as silly, credulous, superstitious, humorous, morose, sullen folks: So that he that will be good, must resolve to bear that usage from them; like *David*; *I will yet be more vile, than thus, and will be base in my own sight*: But with these sufferings a proud heart cannot comport; it goeth too much against the grain thereof to be contemned.

Christianity doth also indispensably require duties, point-blank opposite to pride; it placeth humility among its chief virtues, as a foundation of piety; it enjoineth us to think meanly of our selves, to disclaim our own worth and desert, to have no complacency or confidence in any thing belonging to us; not to aim at high things; to wave the regard and praise of men: It exacteth from us a sense of our vileness, remorse and contrition for our sins, with humble confession of them, self-condemnation and abhorrence: It chargeth us to bear injuries and affronts patiently, without grievous resentment, without seeking or so much as wishing any revenge; to undergo disgraces, crosses, disasters willingly and gladly: It obligeth us *to prefer others before our selves*, sitting down in the lowest room, yielding to the meanest persons; to all which sorts of duty a proud mind hath an irreconcilable antipathy.

A proud man, that is big and swollen with haughty conceit and stomach, cannot stoop down so low, cannot shrink in himself so much as to *enter into the strait gate, or to walk in the narrow way, which leadeth to life*: He will be apt to contemn wisdom and instruction.

Shall I (will he say) such a Gallant as I, so accomplished in worth, so flourishing in dignity, so plump with wealth, so highly regarded, and renowned among

Among Men, thus pitifully crouch and sneak? Shall I deign to avow such beggarly notions, or bend to such homely duties? Shall I disown my perfection, or forego my advantages? Shall I profess my self to have been a despicable worm, a villainous caitiff, a sorry wretch? Shall I suffer my self to be flouted as a timorous Religionist, a scrupulous Precisian, a conscientious Sneak-by? Shall I lie down at the foot of mercy, puling in sorrow, whining in confession, bewailing my guilt, and craving pardon? Shall I allow any man better, or happier than my self? Shall I receive those into consortship, or equality of rank with me, who appear so much my inferiours? Shall I be misused, and trampled on without doing my self right; and making them smart, who shall presume to wrong or cross me? Shall I be content to be no-body in the world! So the proud man will say in his heart, contesting the doctrines and duties of our Religion, and so disputing himself into Infidelity.

10. Another spring of Infidelity is pusillanimity, or want of good resolution and courage: *δειλοί καὶ ἄπιστοι*, Cowards and Infidels are well joined among those who are devoted to the fiery Lake; for timorous men dare not believe such doctrines, which engage them upon undertaking difficult, laborious, dangerous enterprizes; upon undergoing hardships, pains, wants, disgraces; upon encountering those mighty and fierce enemies, with whom every faithful man continually doth wage war.

They have not the heart to look the World in the face, when it frowneth at them, menacing persecution and disgrace; but *when affliction ariseth for the word, they are presently scandalized*. It is said in the Gospel, that *no man spake freely of our Lord for fear of the Jews*; as it so did smother the profession and muzzle the mouth; so it doth often stifle Faith it self, and quell the heart, men fearing to harbour in their very thoughts points dangerous, and discountenanced by worldly power.

They have not also courage to adventure a combat with their own flesh, and those lusts, which war against their Souls; to set upon correcting their temper, curbing their appetites, bridling their passions; keeping flesh and blood in order; upon pulling out their right Eyes, and cutting off their right Hands, and crucifying their members; it daunteth them to attempt duties so harsh and painful.

They have not the resolution to withstand and repel temptations, and in so doing to wrestle with Principalities and Powers; to resist and baffle the strong one. To part with their ease, their wealth, their pleasure, their credit, their accommodations of life, is a thing, any thought whereof doth quash all inclination in a faint and fearful heart of complying with the Christian Doctrine.

Christianity is a Warfare, living after its rules is called *fighting the good fight of Faith*; every true Christian is a *good soldier of Jesus Christ*; the state of Christians must be sometimes like that of the Apostles; who were *troubled on every side*; without were fightings, within were fears: great courage therefore, and undaunted resolution are required toward the undertaking this religion, and the persisting in it cordially.

11. Infidelity doth also rise from sturdiness, fierceness, wildness, untamed animosity of spirit; so that a man will not endure to have his will crossed, to be under any law, to be curb'd from any thing, which he is prone to affect.

12. Blind zeal, grounded upon prejudice, disposing men to stiff adherence unto that, which they have once been addicted and accustomed to, is in the Scripture frequently represented as a cause of Infidelity. So the Jews being filled with zeal, contradicted the things spoken by Saint Paul; flying at his doctrine, without weighing it: So by instinct of zeal did St. Paul himself persecute the Church; being exceedingly zealous for the traditions delivered by his fathers.

καὶ ζήλον διδόνων. Gal. 1. 14. Acts 26. 11. πειρῶντες ἐμμανίζουσιν

In fine, Infidelity doth issue from corruption of mind by any kind of brutish lust, any irregular passion, any bad inclination or habit: any such evil disposition of soul doth obstruct the admission or entertainment of that doctrine, which doth prohibit and check it; doth condemn it, and brand it with infamy; doth denounce punishment and woe to it: whence men of

Οὐ ῥᾶδιον ποιεῖν αὐτὸν ἀντι-
σταθῆναι ταχέως πρὸς τὰ τῶν πα-
τρῶν δογματῶν ὅτι, ἀλλὰ χρὴ πάν-
των καθαρῶν ὅτι πατρῶν ἔμμελλοντα
ἀνεῖν τῇ ἀλήθειᾳ. Chrys. in 1 Cor.
Or. 8.

corrupt

2 Tim. 3. 8. *corrupt minds, and reprobate concerning the faith*; and Men of corrupt minds, 1 Tim. 1. 5. *desitute of the truth*, are attributes well conjoined by St. Paul, as commonly jumping together in practice; and to them (saith he) *that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure, but even their mind, and conscience is defiled*; such pollution is not only consequent to, and connected with, but antecedent to Infidelity, blinding the mind so as not to see the truth, and perverting the will so as not to close with it.

Faith and a good conscience are twins, born together, inseparable from each other, living and dying together; for the first, *faith* is (as St. Peter telleth us) 1 Pet. 3. 21. nothing else but *the stipulation of a good conscience*, fully persuaded that Christianity is true, and firmly resolving to comply with it: and, *The end* (or drift, and purport) of the Evangelical doctrine is *charity out of a pure heart, and a good conscience, and faith unfeigned*; whence those Apostolical precepts, to hold 2 Tim. 3. 9. *the mystery of faith in a pure conscience*; and, to hold *faith and a good conscience, which some having put away, concerning the faith have made shipwreck*; a man void of good conscience will not embark in Christianity; and having laid good conscience aside, he soon will make shipwreck of faith, by apostacy from it. Resolute indulgence to any one lust, is apt to produce this effect.

Matt. 19. 23. If a man be covetous, he can *hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven*, or submit to that heavenly law, which forbiddeth us to *treasure up treasures upon earth*; which chargeth us to be liberal in communication of our goods; so as to Luke 16. 9. *give unto every one that asketh*; which in some cases requireth to sell all our goods, and to give them to the poor; which declareth, that *whosoever doth not bid Luke 14. 33. farewell to all that he hath, cannot be a disciple of Christ*; which ascribeth *happiness to the poor, and denounceth woe to the rich, who have their consolation here*, preach such doctrine to a covetous person, and as the young Gentleman, Matt. 19. 20. *who had great possessions, he will go his way sorrowful*; or will do like the Pharisees, who were covetous, and having heard our Saviour discourse such things, *despised him*; for the love of money (saith St. Paul) is the root of all evil, which 1 Tim. 6. 10. *while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith*; ἀπεπλανήθησαν, they have wandered away, or apostatized from the faith.

If a man be ambitious, he will not approve that doctrine, which prohibiteth us to affect, to seek, to admit glory, or to do any thing for its sake; but purely to seek God's honour, and in all our actions to regard it as our principal aim: which greatly disparageth all worldly glory as vain, transitory, mischievous; which commandeth us *in honour to prefer others before our selves*, and to sit down in the lowest room; which promiseth the best rewards to humility, and menaceth, that *whoever exalteth himself, shall be abased*; the profession and practice whereof are commonly attended with disgrace; such doctrines ambitious minds cannot admit; as it proved among the Jews; who therefore could not believe, Luke 14. 11. *because they received glory from one another*; who therefore would not profess the faith, *because they loved the glory of men, rather than the glory of God*.

If a man be envious, he will not like that doctrine, which enjoyneth him to desire the good of his neighbour, as his own; to have complacence in the prosperity and dignity of his brethren; *not to seek his own, but every man another's wealth, or welfare*; to rejoice with them that rejoice; and mourn with those that mourn; which chargeth us to lay aside all envyings and emulations, under pain of damnation; he therefore who is possessed with an envious spirit, or evil eye; Gal. 5. 20. will look ill upon this doctrine; as the Jews did, who being full of envy and emulation, did reject the Gospel; it being a grievous eye-sore to them, that the poor Gentiles were thereby admitted to favour and mercy.

If a man be revengeful or spiteful, he will be scandalized at that law, which commandeth us to love our enemies, to bless those that curse us, to do good to them that hate us, to pray for them that despitefully use us; which forbiddeth us to resist the evil; to render evil for evil, or railing for railing; which chargeth us to bear patiently, and freely to remit all injuries, under penalty of forfeiting all hopes of mercy from God; which requireth us to depose all wrath, animosity, and malice, as inconsistent with our salvation; which doctrine how can a heart swelling with rancorous grudge, or boiling with anger,

Matt. 5. 44. Rom. 12. 20.
Rom. 12. 17. 1 Pet. 3. 9. Matt. 5. 39.
1 Cor. 6. 7. 1 Thel. 5. 15.

Col. 3. 13. Eph. 4. 32. Matt. 6. 15.
18. 35.

Col. 3. 8. 1 Pet. 2. 1. Gal. 5. 20.
Eph. 4. 31.

ger, embrace? seeing it must be *in meekness that we must receive the engrafted word, that is able to save our souls.*

* If a man be intemperate, he will loath that doctrine, the precepts of which are, that we be *temperate in all things, that we bring under our bodies, that we endure hardship as good souldiers of Christ; to avoid all excess; to possess our vessels in sanctification and honour; to mortifie our members upon earth, to crucifie the flesh with its affections and lusts; to abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul; with which precepts how can a luxurious and filthy heart comport?*

2 Tim. 4. 5. 1 Cor. 9. 25, 27.
2 Tim. 2. 3. 1. 8. 4. 5. Eph. 5. 18.
1 Thes. 4. 4. Col. 3. 5. Gal. 5. 24.
2 Pet. 2. 11.

In fine, whatever corrupt affection a man be possessed with, it will work in him a distaste, and repugnance to that doctrine, which indispenfably, as a condition of salvation, doth prescribe and require universal holiness, purity, innocence, vertue and goodness; which doth not allow any one sin to be fostered or indulged; which threatneth wrath and vengeance upon all impiety, iniquity, impurity, wherein we do obstinately persist; indifferently, without any reserve or remedy; *wherein the wrath of God is revealed from heaven upon all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, that detain the truth in unrighteousness.*

Eph. 2. 11.

4. 22.

Rom. 6. 6.

1 Thess. 4. 7.

Eph. 5. 6.

Col. 3. 6.

Rom. 1. 18.

2. 8.

An impure, a dissolute, a passionate soul cannot affect so holy notions, cannot comply with so strict rules, as the Gospel doth recommend; as a fore eye cannot like the bright day; as a sickly palate cannot relish savoury food. *Every one that doth evil, hateth the light,* because it discovereth to him his own vileness and folly; because it detecteth the sadness and wofulness of his condition; because it kindleth anguish and remorse within him; because it checketh him in the free pursuit of his bad designs, it dampeth the brisk enjoyment of his unlawful pleasures, it robbeth him of satisfaction and glee in any vicious course of practice.

Ἡ ἐμπαθὴς ψυχὴ ὁ δύναται μέγα τι καὶ γενναῖον ἰδεῖν, ἀλλ' ὡσπερ ἐκ τίνος λήμης δολομένη ἀμβλυωπίαν ὑπομένει τῷ καλεπώδῳ τῷ Chryl. in Joh. Orat. 25.

Ἔστι γὰρ, ὅτι καὶ ἐκ τῶν τῶν δεινῶν δακρύων, ἐκ τῶν πολλῶν πρᾶξιν μόνον ἀκαίρως σκοτῶδῶναι τῷ διανοίαν. Ibid.

John 3. 20.

Every man is unwilling to entertain a bad conceit of himself, and to pass on himself a sad doom: he therefore will be apt to reject that doctrine, which, being supposed true, he cannot but confess himself to be an arrant fool, he cannot but grant himself a forlorn wretch.

No man liketh to be galled, to be stung, to be racked with a sense of guilt, to be icared with a dread of punishment; to live under awe and apprehension of imminent danger; gladly therefore would he shun that doctrine, which demonstreteth him a grievous sinner, which speaketh dismal terrour, which thundreth ghastly woe upon him.

He cannot love that truth, which is so much his Enemy, which so rudely treateth and severely persecuteth him; which telleth him so bad and unwelcome news. *

* They hated knowledge, and did not chuse the fear of the LORD, Prov. 1. 29. — 5. 12.

Who would be content to deem omnipotency engaged against him? to fancy himself standing on the brink of a fiery lake? to hear a roaring Lion ready to devour him? to suppose that certain, which is so dreadful and sad to him?

Hence it is, that *the carnal mind is enmity to God; hence do bad men rebel against the light; hence Foolish men shall not attain to wisdom, and sinners shall not see her; for she is far from pride, and men that are lyars cannot remember her.*

Rom. 8. 7.

Job 24. 13.

Ecclus 15. 7.

Hence a man resolutely wicked cannot but be willing to be an Infidel, in his own defence, for his own quiet and ease; faith being a companion very incommoious, intollerably troublesome to a bad conscience.

τὸ ἀπιστεῖν ἢ ἐξ ὁλοκαῖς ἐκ τῆς πρὸς τὸν πληρώσαν ἐκλελυμένης

ἢ ἐκ πολλῶν γίνεται, &c. Chryl. Tom. 6. Orat. 12. (p. 140.)

Ὡς ἐὰν μέλλομεν ἐρριζομένῳ ἔχῃ τῷ πνεύματι, πολιτείας ἡμῶν δὲ καθάρεται, ἡ τὸ πνεῦμα περὶ τῆς μένους, καὶ συνεχῶς ἐκείνης τῷ δυνάμει. Οὐ γὰρ ἐστὶν ἐκ ἐκ βίον ἀκάθαρτον ἔχοντα μὴ περὶ πνεύματι σαλῶσαι, &c. Chryl. Tom. 5. Or. 55.

Being resolv'd not to forsake his lusts, he must quit those opinions, which cross them; seeing it expedient that the Gospel should be false, he will be inclinable to think it so; thus he sinketh down, thus he tumbleth himself headlong into the gulf of Infidelity.

The custom of sinning doth also by degrees so abate, and at length so destroy the loathsomeness, the ugliness, the horror thereof, doth so reconcile it

it to our minds, yea conciliateth such a friendship to it, that we cannot easily believe it so horrid and base a thing, as by the Gospel it is represented to us.

Η πονηρία
φθασάντων τῶν
ἀρετῶν. Vid.
Chryl. in
Joh. Orat. 5.
(p. 582.)

Vicious practice doth also weaken the judgment, and stupify the faculties; so that we cannot clearly apprehend, or judge soundly about spiritual matters.

The same also quencheth God's spirit, and driveth away his grace, which is requisite to the production and preservation of faith in us.

14. In fine, from what spirit Infidelity doth proceed, we may see by the principles commonly with it espoused for its support and countenance, by its great Masters and Patrons; all which do rankly favour of baseness and ill nature.

They do libel and revile mankind as void of all true goodness; from the worst qualities, of which they are conscious themselves, or can observe in others, patching up an odious character of it; thus shrowding themselves under common blame from that which is due to their own wickedness; and dispensing with that charity and honesty, which is by God's law required from them toward their neighbour; and having so bad an opinion of all men, they consequently must bear ill-will toward them; it not being possible to love that, which we do not esteem.

They allow nothing in man to be immaterial, or immortal; so turning him into a beast, or into a puppet, a whirlegig of fate or chance.

They ascribe all actions and events to necessity or external impulse, so raising the grounds of justice, and all virtue, that no man may seem responsible for what he doth, commendable or culpable, amiable or detestable.

They explode all natural difference of good and evil; deriding benignity, mercy, pity, gratitude, ingenuity; that is, all instances of good-nature, as childish and silly dispositions.

All the reliques of God's image in man, which raise him above a beast, and distinguish him from a fiend, they scorn and expose to contempt.

They extol power as the most admirable, and disparage goodness as a pitiful thing; so preferring a Devil before an Angel.

They discard conscience, as a bugbear, to fright children and fools; allowing men to compass their designs by violence, fraud, slander, any *wrongful ways*; so banishing all the securities (*beside selfishness and slavish fear*) of government, conversation and commerce; so that nothing should hinder a man (if he can do it with advantage to himself, and probable safety) to rebel against his Prince, to betray his Country, to abuse his friend, to cheat any man with whom he dealeth.

Such are the principles (not only avowed in common discourse, but taught and maintained in the writings) of our Infidels; whereby the sources of it do appear to be a deplorable blindness, and desperate corruption of mind; an extinction of natural light, and extirpation of good-nature. Farther,

III. The naughtiness of Infidelity will appear by considering its effects and consequences; which are plainly a spawn of all vices and villainies; a deluge of all mischiefs, and outrages upon the earth: for faith being removed, together with it all conscience goeth, no virtue can remain; all sobriety of mind, all justice in dealing; all security in conversation are packed away; nothing resteth to encourage men unto any good, or restrain them from any evil; all hopes of reward from God, all fears of punishment from him being discarded. No principle or rule of practice is left, beside brutish sensuality, fond self-love, private interest, in their highest pitch, without any bound or curb; which therefore will dispose men to do nothing but to prey on each other, with all cruel violence, and base treachery. Every man thence will be a God to himself, a Fiend to each other; so that necessarily the world will thence be turned into a *Chaos* and a Hell, full of iniquity and impurity, of spite and rage, of misery and torment. It depriveth each man of all hope from providence, all comfort and support in affliction, of all satisfaction in conscience, of all the good things which faith doth yield.

The consideration of which numberless and unspeakable mischiefs hath engaged Statesmen in every Common-wealth to support some kind of faith, as needful to the maintenance of publick order, of traffick, of peace among men.

It would suffice to persuade an Infidel, that hath a scrap of wit (for his own interest, safety and pleasure) to cherish faith in others, and wish all men beside himself endued with it.

It in reason obligeth all men to detest Atheistical supplanters of faith, as desperate enemies to mankind, enemies to government, destructive of common society; especially considering that of all religions that ever were, or can be, the Christian doth most conduce to the benefit of publick society; injoining all virtues useful to preserve it in a quiet and flourishing state, teaching Loyalty under pain of damnation.

I pass by, that *without faith no man can please God*; that Infidelity doth expose men to his wrath, and severest vengeance; that it depriveth of all joy and happiness; seeing Infidels will not grant such effects to follow their sin, but will reject the supposition of them as precarious and fictitious. Heb. 11. 6.

To conclude therefore the point, it is from what we have said sufficiently manifest, that Infidelity is a very sinful distemper, as being in its nature so bad; being the daughter of so bad causes, the sister of so bad adjuncts, the mother of so bad effects.

But this you will say is an improper subject: for is there any such thing as Infidelity in *Christendom*? are we not all Christians, all believers, all baptized into the faith, and professors of it? do we not every day repeat the *Creed*, or at least say *Amen* thereto? do we not partake of the holy Mysteries sealing this profession? what do you take us for? for *Pagans*? this is a subject to be treated of in *Turkey*, or in *partibus infidelium*. This may be said; but if we consider better, we shall find ground more than enough for such discourse; and that Infidelity hath a larger territory than we suppose: for (to pass over the swarms of Atheistical apostates, which so openly abound, denying or questioning our Religion) many Infidels do lurk under the *mask of Christian* profession. It is not the name of Christian, or the badges of our Religion, that make a Christian; more than a Cowle doth make a Monk, or the Beard a Philosopher. There may be a *Creed* in the mouth, where there is no faith in the heart, and a Cross impressed on the forehead of an Infidel; *With the heart man believeth to righteousness*: Rom. 10. 8. *Shew me thy faith by thy works*, faith St. James: if no works be shewed, no Jam. 2. 18. faith is to be granted, as where no fruit, there no root, or a dead root, which in effect and moral esteem is none at all.

Is he not an Infidel, who denieth God? such a *renegado* is every one that liveth profanely, as St. Paul telleth us. And have we not many such *renegado's*? Tit. 1. 16. If not, what meaneth that monstrous dissoluteness of life, that horrid profaneness of discourse, that strange neglect of God's service, a desolation of God's law? where such luxury, such lewdness, such avarice, such uncharitableness, such universal carnality doth reign, can faith be there? can a man believe there is a God, and so affront him? can he believe that Christ reigneth in heaven, and so despise his laws? can a man believe a judgment to come, and so little regard his life, a heaven and so little seek it, a hell and so little shun it?—Faith therefore is not so rife, Infidelity is more common than we may take it to be: Every sin hath a spice of it, some sins smell rankly of it.

To it are attributed all the rebellions of the *Israelites*, which are the types of all Christian professors, who seem travellers in this earthly wilderness toward the heavenly *Canaan*; and to it all the enormities of sin and overflowings of iniquity may be ascribed.

I should proceed to urge the Precept, that *we take heed thereof*; but the time will not allow me to do it: I shall only suggest to your Meditation the heads of things.

It is Infidelity, that maketh men covetous, uncharitable, discontent, pusillanimous, impatient.

Because men believe not providence, therefore they do so greedily scrape, and hoard.

They do not believe any reward for charity, therefore they will part with nothing.

They do not hope for succour from God, therefore are they discontent, and impatient.

They have nothing to raise their spirits, therefore are they abject.

Infidelity did cause the Devils Apostasy.

Infidelity did banish Man from Paradise (trusting to the Devil, and distrust-
ing God's word.)

Infidelity (disregarding the warnings and threats of God) did bring the deluge
on the World.

Heb. 3. 19.
—4. 6, &c.

Infidelity did keep the *Israelites* from entering into *Canaan*, the type of Heaven;
as the Apostle to the *Hebrews* doth insist.

Infidelity indeed is the root of all sin; for did men heartily believe the promi-
ses to obedience; and the threats to disobedience, they could hardly be so unrea-
sonable as to forfeit the one, or incur the other: did they believe that the Om-
nipotent, All-wise, Most just and severe God did command and require such a
practice, they could hardly dare to omit or transgress.

Let it therefore suffice to have declared the evil of Infidelity, which alone is
sufficient inducement to avoid it.

I Believe, &c.

SERMON II.

OF THE

Vertue and Reasonableness

OF

FAITH.

II PET. I. 1.

To them that have obtained like precious faith with us.

THE Holy Scripture recommendeth Faith (that is, a hearty and firm persuasion concerning the principal doctrines of our Religion, from divine revelation taught by our Lord and his Apostles) as a most precious, and honourable practice; as a vertue of the first magnitude, very commendable in it self, † very acceptable to God, very beneficial to us; having † most excellent fruits growing from it, most noble privileges annexed to it, † most ample rewards assigned for it.

It is in a special manner commanded, and obedience to that command is reckoned a prime instance of piety: *This is his commandment, that we should believe; this is the work of God, that ye believe on him, whom he hath sent.*

It is the root of our spiritual life; for *He that cometh to God must believe; and, add to your faith vertue,* faith St. Peter, supposing faith to precede other vertues.

It is the principal conduit of divine grace: for

By it we are regenerated, and become the Sons of God; *Ye all (faith St. Paul) are the Sons of God by faith in Christ Jesus.*

By it we abide in God, and do possess him, faith St. John.

By it Christ dwelleth in us, faith St. Paul.

By it we obtain God's Spirit: *Did ye (faith St. Paul) receive the spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?*

By it we are justified, or acquitted from guilt, and condemnation for sin: for, *Being justified by faith, we have peace with God.*

By it our hearts are purged (faith St. Paul) our souls are purified, faith St. Peter.

By it we are freed from the dominion of sin; according to that of our Saviour; *If ye abide in my word, — ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free.*

It procureth freedom of access to God — *we have (faith St. Paul) boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him.*

1 Pet. 5. 9. It is the *shield*, whereby we *resist* temptations; and the weapon, whereby
 1 John 5. 5. we *overcome the world*.

1 Tim. 1. 19. In fine, it is that, which being *retained in a good conscience*, and maintained
 3. 9. 1. 5: by vertuous practice, doth keep us in a state of salvation,
 Eph. 2. 8. Rom. 10. 10. Rom. 8. 24. and will assuredly convey us into eternal life and felicity;
 1. 16. Heb. 10. 34. 1 Pet. 1. 9. Luke for, *by grace we are saved, through faith*.
 8. 12. Acts 16. 30, 31. 2 Thel. 2. 10.

Πίστις — ἡν διαβάλλουσι, κενὴ καὶ
 βάρβαρον νομίζοντες Ἕλληνας, Clem.
 Str. 2. (p. 265.)

Pagani nobis obijcere solent, quod re-
 ligio nostra, quia quasi rationibus des-
 cit, in sola credendi persuasione con-
 stat. Ruff. in Symb.

Ἀδίκημα καὶ δικαιοπραγία. Δείξει
 τὸ ἐκαστὸν καὶ ἀκρίβως, Arist. Eth. 5.
 8. 3. 1.

That Faith should be thus highly dignified, hath always
 appeared strange to the Adversaries of our Religion; and
 hath suggested to them matter of obloquy against it; they
 could not apprehend why we should be commanded, or
 how we can be obliged to believe; as if it were an arbitra-
 ry thing, depending on our free choice, and not rather did
 naturally follow the representation of objects to our mind:
 they would not allow, that an act of our understanding,
 hardly voluntary, as being extorted by force of arguments,
 should deserve such reputation, and such recompences; for

if (argued they) a doctrine be propounded with evident and cogent reason,
 what vertue is there in believing it, seeing a man in that case cannot avoid
 believing it, is therein merely passive, and by irresistible force subdued? If it
 be propounded without such reason, what fault can it be to refuse assent, or to
 suspend his opinion about it? can a wise man then do otherwise? is it not in
 such a case simplicity, or fond credulity to yield assent; yea is it not deceit or
 hypocrisy to pretend the doing so? may not justly then all the blame be char-
 ged rather on the incredibility of the doctrine, or the infirmity of reasons en-
 forcing it, than on the incredulity of the person, who doth not admit it?
 whence no Philosophers ever did impose such a Precept, or did assign to Faith
 a place among the Vertues.

To clear this matter, and to vindicate our Religion from such misprisions;
 and that we may be engaged to prize and cherish it, I shall endeavour to de-
 clare, that Christian Faith doth worthily deserve all the commendations, and
 the advantages granted thereto; this I shall do by considering its nature and
 ingredients, its rise and causes, its efficacy and consequences.

Πίστις δ' εἰς τὴν
 θεὸν γινώσκει-
 ὥς ὁδοποιεῖ-
 σαι. Chryst.
 T. 5. Or. 55. I. As to its Nature; it doth involve knowledge, knowledge of most worthy
 and important truths, knowledge peculiar and not otherwise attainable,
 knowledge in way of great evidence and assurance.

Ἀλήθεια δὲ πάντων μὲν ἀγαθῶν θε-
 οὐς ἡγᾶται, πάντων δ' ἀνθρώπων. Plat.
 de Leg. (p. 841.) de Rep. 6. (p. 675.) 1. Truth is the natural food of our soul, toward which it
 hath a greedy appetite, which it tasteth with delicious com-
 placency, which being taken in and digested by it doth ren-
 der it lusty, plump and active: truth is the special ornament

Plat. 119. 142. of our mind, decking it with a graceful and pleasant lustre; truth is the proper
 151. wealth of reason, whereof having acquired a good stock, it appeareth rich, prof-

Joh. 1. 7. 3. 19. perous, and mighty: what light is without, that is truth within, shining on our
 Plat. 119. 105. inward world, illustrating, quickning, and comforting all things there, exci-
 ting all our faculties to action, and guiding them in it. All knowledge there-
 fore, which is the possession of truth, is much esteemed; even that, which re-
 specteth objects mean, and little concerning us (such as humane Sciences are
 conversant about; natural appearances, historical events, the properties, pro-
 portions and powers of figure, of motion, of corporeal force) doth bear a good
 price, as perfective of rational nature, enriching, adorning, invigorating our
 mind; whence Aristotle doubteth not upon all those habitual endowments,
 which so accomplish our understanding, to bestow the name of Vertues; that
 with him being the *Vertue of each thing, which any-wise perfecteth it, and dis-*
poseth it for action suitable to its nature. And if ignorance, error, doubt are
 defects, deformities, infirmities of our soul, then the knowledge, which remo-
 veth them, doth imply the perfection, beauty and vigour thereof. Faith there-
 fore as implying knowledge is valuable.

Πᾶσα ἀρετὴ
 ἢ ἀνὴρ ἢ ἀρετὴν
 αὐτὸς τε εὐ-
 χόμενος ἀποτελεῖ,
 καὶ τὸ ἐργον
 αὐτοῦ εὐ ἀπο-
 δίδωσι, Arist.
 Eth. 2. 6. 2. But it is much more so, in regard to the quality of its objects, which are
 the most worthy that can be, and most useful for us to know: the knowledge
 whereof doth indeed advance our soul into a better state, doth ennoble, enrich
 and imbellish our nature; doth raise us to a nearer resemblance with God, and
 participation of his wisdom; doth infuse purest delight, and satisfaction into
 our

our hearts: doth qualifie and direct us unto practice, most conducive to our welfare; 'tis a knowledge, *enlightning the eyes, converting the soul, rejoicing the heart; sweeter than honey, and the honey-comb; more precious than rubies; which giveth to our Head an ornament of grace, and a crown of glory.* For,

Pfalm. 119. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15.

Thereby we understand the Nature, or the principal attributes of God, of whom only the Christian doctrine doth afford a completely true and worthy character, directive of our esteem, our worship, our obedience, our imitation of him; whereby our demeanour toward him may become him, and please him.

By it we are fully acquainted with the will and intentions of God, relating both to our duty and our recompence; what he requireth from us, and what he designeth for us; upon what terms he will proceed with us in way of grace, of mercy, of justice.

By it we are informed concerning our selves, what our frame is, whence our original, to what ends we are designed, wherein our felicity doth consist, and how it is attainable.

It enableth us rightly to distinguish between good and bad, right and wrong; what is worthy of us, and pleasing to God, what misbecoming us and offensive to him; both absolutely and comparatively, according to the degrees of each case respectively.

It prescribeth us an exact rule of life, comprizing all our duties toward God, our neighbour, our selves; to observe which will be most decent, and exceedingly profitable to us.

It teacheth us from what principles, and upon what grounds we should act, that our practice should be truly good, and laudable.

It proposeth the most valid inducements to vertue, tending the favour of God and eternal bliss in reward thereof, menacing divine wrath, and endless woe, upon its neglect.

It discovereth the special aids dispensed to us for the support of our weakness against all temptations and discouragements incident to us through the course of our life.

The knowledge of these things is plainly the top of all knowledge, whereof we are capable; not consisting in barren notion, not gratifying idle curiosity, not serving trivial purposes, but really bettering our souls, producing most goodly and wholesome fruits, tending to ends most noble and worthy, this indeed is the highest Philosophy; the true culture, and medicine of our soul, the true guide of life, and mistress of action; the mother of all virtues; the best invention of God, and rarest gift of heaven to men; for these commendations, by Pagan Sages ascribed to their Philosophy, do in truth solely belong to that knowledge, which by faith we do possess: their Philosophy could not reach such truths; it could not so much as aim at some of them; it did but weakly attempt at any: It did indeed pretend to the knowledge of divine and humane things (this being its definition, current among them) but it had no competent means of attaining either in any considerable measure; for divine things (the

Cultura animi, Cic. Tusc. 1. Medicina animi, Tusc. 3. O vita Philosophia dux, &c. Tusc. 5. de Leg. 1. de Fin. 3. Nec ullum arbitror, ut apud Platonem est, majus aut melius a Diis datum munus homini. Acad. 1. Tusc. 1.

Omnis optimarum rerum cognitio, atq; in iis exercitatio Philosophia nominatur. de Orat. 3.

Οὐκ ἐχέουσιν διδασκαλοὶ περὶ θεῶν λέγοντες ἀνθρώποι καὶ ἀνθρώποι, &c. Cl. Alex. Str. 6. (p. 501.)

• nature of him, who dwelleth in light which no man can approach unto; the intentions of him, who worketh all things after the counsel of his will; the ways of him, which are more discovered from our ways, than heaven from Earth; the depths of God, which none but his own spirit can search out or discover) do lie beyond the sphere of natural light, and inquisition of our reason: and as for humane things, the chief of them have such a connexion with divine things, that who were ignorant of the one, could no wise descry the other; wherefore those candidates of knowledge, notwithstanding their lofty pretences, were fain to rest in a low form, employing their studies on inferiour things, the obscurity of nature, the subtilty of discourse, and moral precepts of life; such precepts, as their glimmering light, and common experience did suggest; for even in points of common morality and prudence humane wit can but fumble, as by the great clashing and jangling about them, is very notorious.

Philosophia in tres partes distributa est, in naturæ obscuritatem, in differendi subtilitatem, in vitam atque mores. Cic. de Orat. 1.

Prov. 1. 4. Pl. So real a property it is of God's law to give subtilty to the simple, to the young
19. 7. Pl. 19. *man knowledge and discretion*; so true it is, that our Lord affirmeth of himself,
9, 100, 130. *I came a light into the world, that he who believeth in me, may not abide in dark-*
John 12. 46. *ness*: So justly doth St. Paul affirm concerning divine revelation, *that it is able*
8. 12. *to make a man wise to salvation, through faith, which is in Christ Jesus*; being profit-
2 Tit. 3. 15, *able for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that*
16, 17. *the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works*. This is
that high-way of holiness, of which the Prophet saith, — *the way-faring men,*
II. 35. 8. *though*

though fools, shall not err therein. Thus is faith in its nature honourable.

II. It hath also divers ingredients, or inseparable adjuncts, which it doth imply, rendring it commendable and acceptable to God. As,

1. Faith implieth a good use of reason. This is that which commendeth any virtue, that a man acting after it, doth act wisely, in conformity to the frame and design of his nature, or like a rational creature; using his best faculties in the best manner, and in their proper operations towards the end intended by the all-wise Creatour: this is that, upon which all dispensation of justice is founded, a man being accomptable for the use of his reason, so as to deserve reward for the right management, and punishment for the misuse thereof; this is that consequently, whereon God so often declareth himself to ground his judgment; so that in effect, he will justify men for being wise, and condemn them as guilty of folly; whence in the holy Style, wisdom, and virtue or piety, are terms equivalent; and a fool doth signify the same with a vicious, or impious person. And if ever a man deserveth commendation for well using his reason, it is then, when upon mature deliberation he doth embrace the Christian doctrine; for so doing is a most rational act, arguing the person to be sagacious, considerate and judicious; one, who doth carefully enquire into things, doth seriously weigh the case, doth judge soundly about it.

It was a foul aspersions cast upon our Religion by its ancient opposers, that it did

require *ψιλλὴ καὶ ἀλογον πίσιν, a mere belief, void of reason*; challenging assent to its doctrines without any trial or proof. This suggestion, if true, were, I confess, a mighty prejudice against it, and no man indeed justly could be obliged to admit it upon such terms; but it is really a gross calumny; such a proceeding being disclaimed by the teachers and advocates of our Religion; being repugnant to the nature and tenour thereof; being prejudicial to its interest and design; being contrary to its use and practice. Never any Religion was indeed so liable to the censure of obtruding it self on mens credulity, none ever so freely exposed it self to a fair trial at the bar of reason; none ever so earnestly invited men to scan and sift its pretences; yea provoked them for its sake and their own, upon most important considerations (at the peril of their souls, as they tendered their own best advantage) to a fair, discreet, careful examination thereof. Other Religions have for their justification insisted upon the examples of Ancestors, custom and prescription of times, large extent and prevalence among crews of people, establishment by civil laws, and countenance of secular powers (arguments extrinsecal, and of small validity in any case) declining all other test and verdict of reason: But our Religion confideth in it self, and the pure merit of its cause; and therefore warneth men, in a case of such moment, laying aside all prejudice, to employ their best understandings on an industrious and impartial search of the truth; referring the decision and result, so far as concerneth each particular man, to the verdict of that reason and conscience, with which God, in order to such purposes, hath endued every person.

It indeed ordinarily doth refuse a sudden and precipitate assent, admitting no man, capable of judging and chusing for himself, to the participation of it, or to the name and privileges of a worthy believer, until after a competent time, and opportunities of instruction, he can approve himself to understand it well, and doth avow himself to be cordially persuaded of its truth.

Such is its method, and it hath not any need of other; God having provided and exhibited arguments abundantly sufficient to convince any man of its truth, who is not affectedly blind and stupid, or wantonly slothful and careless, or forwardly stiff and obstinate.

What indeed better arguments (considering the nature of the objects, which faith respecteth, being things spiritual and invisible; considering also the capacities of persons concerned, being all sorts of people, wise and simple, learned and rude) could we have, or could we need, than the conspicuous excellency and usefulness of the doctrine, approving it self to the mind, and confirming it self by palpable experience of most happy fruits, springing from a practice con-

Μὴ ἐξετάζε, ἀλλὰ πίσευσον. Orig. in Cell. (p. 84.)

Πίσευσον, εἰ σωθῆναι θέλεις, ἢ ἀπιδι. Id. in Cell. 6. (p. 282.)

Ὅ ταῦτα πισύσας ἐχ' ἀπλῶς ἐδὲ ἀλόγως, ἀλλὰ κείσει καὶ πληροφροῦν χάρεισμα ἔληφεν ἐν θεῷ. Const. Apost. 8. 1.

Δέχεσθε, φησιν, ἀπλῶς τὰ λεγόμενα, καὶ μηδὲς ἐξετάζετε τι πρέπον ἐν αὐτοῖς καὶ τι ἀπρεπές· καὶ πίσιν ὁνομάζει τὴν ἀβασάνισον ἐπὶ τοῖς ἀσάτοις καὶ ἀναποδείκτοις ἐπὶ ἐλάβῃ συγκατάθεσιν. Athan. Tom. 2. p. 325. de Arianis.

Ἐγγνώμων ἐξετάσις. Orig.

La. 2. 6.

La. 2. 7.

1 Pet. 1. 10. formable thereo? than its exact correspondence to manifold ancient prognostications and predictions concerning it; than special attestations of God thereto, not only by audible voices, and visible apparitions from heaven, but also by, Hel. 2. 4. innumerable miraculous works; than the concurrence of divine providence in Acts 4. 33. strange methods to the propagation and maintenance of it; than the blessings and consolations attending a faithful observance of it? What

John 7. 17. Acts 5. 32.

Τὸ ἀναγκαστικώτερον εἰς συγκρίσειν, εἴπε μοι, περὶ ἁρξων πολλοῦ καὶ τὸ συμπέραςμα ἀκόλουτον ἐαυτοῖς ἐρελκόμενα, ἢ δαῦμα τοσούτων ἐνεργῶς ὁρώμενον, πᾶσαν ἀνθρώπου δύναμιν ὑπερβαῖνον. Bal. in Ps. 115.

subtlety of discourse, what charm of eloquence could serve to evince and impress the great truths concerning the attributes, providence, will, commands and promises of God; concerning the immortal subsistence of our soul, the future judgment, the everlasting rewards hereafter, with such evidence and such force, to the common and vulgar reason, or

indeed to any reason of man, as do these plain arguments, needing no reach of wit, or depth of judgment, to sound their meaning, or feel their strength?

But if any man be too wise to be pleased with such downright and easy ways of conviction, reason it self, well followed, would lead him hither, and serve to produce faith in him: for that there is a God, reason from observation of appearances in nature and providence, will collect; that goodness is one of his principal attributes, reason from the same grounds will infer; that God hath an especial regard to men, will thence also become notorious; that consequently God will vouchsafe his guidance to men in their way toward happiness, will appear reasonable to conceive; that God hath not done this in any other way, reason comparing and weighing things, will easily discern; that Christian doctrine may fairly pretend thereto, reason soon will admit: so hath reason led us to the door of faith, and being arrived thither, will (if our will be not averse) easily find entrance.

John 3. 21.
1 Pet. 2. 9.
Acts 26. 18.

Hence God doth not only allow, but enjoin us to use our best reason in judging of this doctrine, whether it be from him, and worthy of our acceptance: he doth not bid us to retire into the dark, to shut our eyes, or to wink, when we receive it; but chargeth us to go into the clearest light, to open our eyes wide, to view it thoroughly with our best senses, and sharpest attention, before we do yield our consent and approbation to it: His precepts are, that *we examine all things, and hold fast that which is good*; that *we believe not every spirit (or revelation pretended) but try the Spirits, whether they be of God*; that *we stand on our guard, and take heed that no man deceive us*; that *we be not fools, nor children in understanding*; but *wise, and perfect men*; that *we compare things different, and try what is well pleasing to God*; that *we be always ready with meekness and modesty to render unto every man demanding it an account of the hope in us*.

1 Theff. 5. 21.

1 John 4. 1.

Matt. 24. 4. Eph. 5. 6.
Eph. 5. 15, 17. 1 Cor. 14. 20.
Eph. 5. 10. Rom. 12. 2.
1 Cor. 10. 15. Rom. 1. 18.
Phil. 1. 10. 1 Pet. 3. 15.

He therefore doth expostulate with men for their dulness, their incogitancy, their sluggishness, their folly, as the causes of their unbelief; declaring, that in respect to such defaults, wilfully incurred, he will proceed to condemn it: *He (saith our Lord) that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him; the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day*: and, *If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not: If I had not come and spoken unto them—If I had not done among them the works, which no other man did, they had not had sin*: Our Lord we see did not urge his bare authority, or exact a faith without ground; but he claimeth it as due upon two most rational accounts, his convincing discourses, and his unparallel'd works; which from any well advised and well disposed person could not but win belief, that he was *a teacher sent from God*.

John 7. 46.
—3. 2.

Indeed, if we seriously do weigh the case, we shall find, that to require faith without reason, is to demand an impossibility; for faith is an effect of persuasion, and persuasion is nothing else but the application of some reason to the mind, apt to draw forth its assent: no man therefore can believe he knoweth not what or why; he that truly believeth, must apprehend the proposition, and he must discern its connexion with some principle of truth, which as more notorious to him he before doth admit; otherwise he doth only pretend to believe, out of some design, or from affection to some party; his faith is not so much really faith, as hypocrisy, craft, fondness, or faction.

God therefore neither doth nor can enjoin us faith without reason; but therefore doth require it, as matter of duty, from us, because he hath furnished sufficient reason to persuade us: And having made his doctrine credible (*a faithful* (or *credible*) *word, and worthy of all acceptation*) having given us reason chiefly to be employed in such matters, as he justly may claim our assent, so he will take well our ready surrendry of it to him, as an act of reason and wisdom becoming us.

To yield unto reason fairly proposed and proved, is in any case a laudable quality, signifying that a man hath his reason to purpose, that he is guided and governed thereby, not by humour or fancy; qualifying him for conversation and business, for which nothing rendreth a man more unfit than humorous incredulity, or obstinacy against reason: It is especially commendable in these cases, concerning our better part, and final state, arguing a man to be sober and advised, affording regard to things best deserving it, employing his consideration in due place, being faithful and just to himself, in attending to his main concerns.

2. Faith implieth a compliance with the providence and grace of God; with his providence framing the œconomy of things to be believed, discovering it to the world by special revelation, furnishing motives apt to work faith, dispensing opportunities of knowledge leading thereto; with his grace operating in our souls, by illustration of our minds to discern, attraction of our wills to embrace, inclination of our affections to relish and like the heavenly truths exhibited to us.

There is no man to whom means are not administered sufficient to produce in him that measure of faith, which is requisite toward the good management of his life, and his rendring an account for it at God's tribunal; there is no man also, to whom such means are afforded, whom the grace of God (*who desireth that all men should be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth*) doth not in some degree excite to the due improvement of them, but in effect the case is varied, because some men do embrace those means, and comply with that grace, while others do reject, or neglect them.

Our Lord saith, that *every one, who hath heard of the Father, and hath learned, doth come unto him*; but some there are, to whom the Father speaketh, yet they stop their ears, and refuse to hear; some do hear in a sort, but do not learn, ill prejudices or depraved affections barring instruction from their mind; being like those of whom the Apostle saith, *the word heard did not profit them, being not mingled with faith in those which heard it*.

John 6. 45.

Job 33. 16. Zech. 7. 11. Ezek. 3. 11. 2 Tim. 4. 4. Acts 7. 57. Job 33. 14. 21. 14. Heb. 3. 7, 15.

Heb. 4. 2.

No man (saith our Lord again) *can come unto me, except the Father draw him*; but this attraction is not compulsory, we may hold back; we may withstand it, and not follow.

John 6. 44. John 5. 40. Mat 22. 3. Luke 13. 34.

Faith (saith St. Paul) *is a gift of God, and a favour granted to us by his Spirit*; to you (saith he) *it hath been graciously vouchsafed not only to believe in him, but also to suffer for him*; and to you (saith our Lord) *it is given to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of heaven*: but this gift is not always accepted, this favour is not always entertained; God doth not so obtrude it on us, but that we may reject or decline it.

Eph. 2. 8. Phil. 1. 29. (Eph. 1. 17. Mat. 13. 11.)

Faith is *a fruit of God's spirit*; but such as will not grow in a bad soil, not purged from weeds of corrupt prejudice, of vicious affection, of worldly care; which will not thrive without good care and culture.

Gal. 5. 22. Matt. 16. 17. 1 Cor. 12. 3, 9. 1 John 2. 20. 4. 2.

God inviteth us to believe by the promulgation of his Gospel, and exhortation of his Ministers; he declareth abundant reason to persuade us; he representeth to our minds the beauty of Christian truth and virtue; he speaketh from without unto us by manifold arguments, able, if we are not very stupid, to convince us; he speaketh within by strong impressions on our consciences, apt, if we are not very stubborn, to subdue us: *Behold, saith he, I stand at the door, and knock; if any man will hear my voice, and will open the door, I will come in unto him*. Such is the case, God standeth at the door of our heart by the ministry of his word,

he

he knocketh at it by the impulse of his grace; but to hear is the work of our vigilance, to open is an act of our voluntary compliance.

Cor. 4. 6. Eph. 1. 17, 18. God (saith St. Paul) who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ; God shineth upon us by revelation of his truth, God shineth into us by illumination of his spirit; the which through the ear doth convey the light of truth unto the heart; but we may by wilful obstruction exclude that light, shutting the windows of our heart against it; we may there quench it by foul affections, we may smother it in fogs of evil prejudice; we may dissipate it by troublesome cares; we may, by affected blindness, or drowsie negligence render it indiscernible, or ineffectual to us; like those, of whom the Apostle there saith, that the God of this world had blinded the minds of those which believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.

2 Cor. 3. 14. 2 Cor. 4. 4. Acts 13. 46. Acts 7. 51. Matt. 13. 4. &c. Joh. 3. 20. 1. 5. Joh. 24. 13. Luke 7. 30. Matt. 23. 37. A man may ἀπωθεῖσθαι τὸ λόγον, thrust away the word, as it is said of the Jews; he may, as others of the same stamp did, resist the spirit; he may (as those worldlings in the Gospel) let the seed fall beside him, or not fall deep into him, or fall into thorns, which may choke it; he may hate the light, and therefore not come unto it; or rebel against it, as those did in Job; he may, as the Pharisees did, defeat the counsels, and cross the desires of God.

And as to deal thus with God's word and providence, thus to treat his spirit and grace is heinously criminal, so to use them well is very acceptable to God's goodness; if we yield due regard to his providence, and an obsequious ear to his word; if we cheerfully do accept his gifts, and close with his overtures of mercy; if we concur with his motions and farther his gracious designs, he will take it kindly of us; as therein acting becomingly toward him, and gratifying him in that, wherein he most delighteth, which is the procurement of our good.

3. Faith doth imply good opinion of God, and good actions toward him.

Τὸ φυσικὸν φίλτερον παρὰ τὴν κτίσιν αὐτοῦ. Orig. God our parent hath stamped on our nature some lineaments of himself, whereby we resemble him; he hath implanted in our soul some roots of piety toward him, into our frame he hath inserted some propensions to acknowledge him, and to affect him; the which are excited and improved by observing the manifest footsteps of divine power, wisdom and goodness, which occur in the works of nature and providence; to preserve and cherish these is very commendable; a man thereby keeping the pretious reliques of the divine image from utter defacement, retaining somewhat of his primitive worth and integrity; declaring that by ill usage he hath not quite flattered or spoiled his best faculties and inclinations.

Now that he who believeth hath thus managed himself, so as to have preserved in his soul those seeds of piety, apt to conspire with the influences of grace drawing to belief, doth appear from hence, that faith doth include an assent to divers points, so thwarting our carnal sense and gust, that without a good esteem of God, and good affection toward him, we hardly could admit them; the carnal mind (or brutish part within us) being, as St. Paul saith, enmity to God, and incapable of submission to his law; the sensual man being not able to receive the things of God, for they are foolishness to him; to balance which repugnance and indisposition, there must be some good notions and good affections in the mind, disposing it to comply with the revelation of truth, and operation of grace.

There can hardly be any greater instance of respect and love toward any person, than a ready yielding of assent to his words, when he doth aver things to our conceit absurd or incredible; than resting on his promise, when he seemeth to offer things impossible, or strangely difficult; than imbracing his advice, when he recommendeth things very cross to our interest, humour and pleasure; whence Abraham's faith (expressed in hoping for a Son in his decrepit age, and in offering up that Son, who was so dear to him, who was the heir of promise, the prop of his family and hope) is so magnified, as an argument of exceeding respect and affection toward God; Abraham believed God, and it was imputed to him for righteousness, and he was called the friend of God; it was a great evidence of his friendship, that against hope he believed in hope, being fully persuaded that what God had promised, he was able to perform; and therefore

James 2. 23.

Rom. 4. 18,

21.

Heb. 11. 19,

11.

fore it *was imputed to him for righteousness*; or accepted by God, as a signal act of goodness, whereby he did testify his immovable opinion concerning the power, fidelity and benignity of God, together with answerable good-will toward him.

And many things doth the Christian doctrine propose, apt to try such a friendship; many a *hard saying* doth it assert, which a profane mind can hardly swallow, or digest; there is indeed scarce any Article of faith, at which we shall not boggle; any matter of duty, which we shall not start at; any promise of God, whereat we shall not stagger, if we be not seasoned with favourable apprehensions and inclinations toward him, who recommendeth them to us, as endued with those attributes, which secure their credibility.

That God Almighty should erect this stately fabrick of heaven and earth, decked with so rich and goodly furniture, with especial regard to Man, so puny and mean a creature, whom he foresaw so ready to offend and wrong him; that upon his foul misdemeanour God should not withdraw his gracious protection and care from him, but thence should take occasion of designing and capacitating him for a state far more happy than that whence he had lapsed, making his punishment a benefit, and his deserved death a gate of immortality; that for the redemption of him (continuing in Apostasy, and rebellious enmity) God should please to send down out of his bosom, from the height of glory and blessedness, his own dearest Son, to partake the baseness and infirmity of our flesh, to endure the inconveniences and troubles incident to our condition, to undergo a most painful and ignominious death for the expiation of our offences; these are mysteries, to which we should not easily give credence, did we not conceive God immensely good and gracious.

That God could not pitch on more compendious and commodious ways of expressing his goodness and mercy, we hardly should admit, if we did not take him to be transcendently wise, far beyond our reach, and comprehension.

Eph. 3. 8. ἀ-
νεξήκτιστος
πλῆρης τοῦ
Χριστοῦ.

That *Jesus*, a man in appearance like to our selves, of mean parentage, of poor estate, who lived as a beggar and a vagrant, who died as a malefactor and a slave, in semblance forlorn to God and man, should be the Lord of life and glory, the general author of salvation, the Judge of all men, the King of all the world, is a point, which cannot but appear very strange, very scandalous to minds not imbued with special reverence of the divine power and wisdom.

That God, who is so perfectly holy, so exactly just, so extremely displeased with iniquity, should yet bear so patiently, and so easily pardon enormous transgressions against himself; that he should accept so mean services, and to so slight performances should dispense so precious rewards, who would believe, that is not possessed with conceptions of his admirable clemency and bounty?

That God one day will raise the dead, recollecting our scattered dust, and rearing our dissolved frame, we should not easily grant, had we not a strong opinion of God's power, and that *nothing is too hard for him* to accomplish.

That to deny our selves in all ways, to *hate our own souls*, to take up a cross, to forsake kindred and friends, to quit houses and lands, to *renounce all that we have*, to reject the profits, the honours, the delights of the world, to cut off our right hands, to pluck out our right eyes, to mortify our members, and crucify our flesh, to be dead to the world, to expose our lives unto greatest dangers, yea to sacrifice them unto certain loss, are often things very good, most advisable and eligible, how could we be ever induced to conceive, if we did not take God to be most wise, who hath prescribed such duties, most faithful, who hath engaged to satisfy us for the discharge of them, most able fully to requite us for the pains and damages, which we sustain in such practice?

That the methods of providence should be so intricate and unaccountable, that the passage to happiness should be so rough, and that to misery so smooth; that He who disposeth all things, should to those whom he most liketh and loveth dispense temptations, crosses, disgraces, all kinds of hardship and sorrow; permitting those whom he disapproveth and detesteth, to live without interruption in quiet, splendour and jollity; would stumble one, who hath not entertained a general assurance concerning the wisdom and equity of God.

Faith therefore, in most of its chief parts, doth imply him that owneth it, to be well conceited, and well affected toward his Maker; thereby avowing his most glorious perfections, the which do assure the truth of his word and doctrine; *John 3. 3.* *He (saith our Lord) that hath received my testimony, hath set his seal, that God is true;* that is, most evidently he doth signify his opinion of God's veracity and fidelity, together with the divine perfections requisite to make them good: for be (saith the believer in his mind) the proposition never so uncouth to my apprehension, yet God is true who affirmeth it; be the duty never so harsh to my sense, yet God is wise and good who appointeth it; be the promise never so unlikely in appearance to find effect, yet God is faithful and able to perform it: And he that is thus disposed in judgment and affection toward God, no wonder if his demeanour be very acceptable to him.

Thus is faith precious, considering its nature, and those essential ingredients, or inseparable adjuncts, which it doth include or imply. It will also appear to be so, if we consider its rise, and those good dispositions, which concur in its production.

III. i. To the engendring of faith there is required a mind sober, composed and wakeful, ready to observe what befalleth, apt to embrace what is offered, conducive to our good and advantage; a mind not so drowned in worldly care, sensual enjoyment, or impertinent sport, as to oversee or neglect the concerns of our better part, and eternal state.

That we may believe, we must have *eyes to see, and ears to hear, and a heart to understand*; we must attently look with our eyes; we must *incline our ears to God's word*; we must *apply our heart to instruction*.
Deut. 29. 4. Matt. 13. 9. 11. 15. Apoc. 2. 7. Pl. 78. 1. Job 13. 17. Isa. 32. 3. 35. 5. Prov. 23. 12. 2. 10. 4. 1, 20. 7. 24.

Thus in the Apostolical history we may observe, that when the Apostles, in a manner apt to stir any man, being awake, to remark, did propose their doctrine, some readily did yield their ears and hearts to their discourse; while others did not mind or regard it.

2. Faith doth require much diligence and industry: we must have the patience to give God the hearing, carefully attending to what is propounded, as it is said of *Lydia*, that she did *παραστήτω, attend to the words spoken by Saint Paul*, and *δεῖ περισσοτέρως παραστήτω, we must (saith the Apostle to the Hebrews) yield extraordinary attention to the things heard*; we must, as our Saviour warneth, let the Evangelical word sink down into our ears: we must take the pains to consider the notions, and to weigh the reasons enforcing them; as the *Beræans* did, who did *ἀνακρίναι τὰς γραφάς, examine the Scriptures, whether those things were so, as St. Paul did teach out of them*. We must *ἐνδελεχῶς ποιεῖν τὸν λόγον, exert and demonstrate that studious care*, which is requisite to get a clear knowledge, and firm persuasion concerning the points of belief; for *he that received the seed into the good ground, was ὁ τὸν λόγον ἀκούων καὶ συνιὼν, he that heard the word, and did understand it, or well consider it*; God for this reason doth lay his truth not so open, or obvious, that we may be somewhat exercised, and put to use a pious diligence in finding it; it lieth under the surface, that we may delve for it; *searching the Scriptures, weighing reasons, comparing things*.
1 Tim. 4. 13. Acts 16. 14. Heb. 2. 1. Luke 9. 44. Acts 17. 11. Heb. 6. 11, 12. Heb. 4. 11. σπουδάζοντες εἰσελθεῖν. Mat. 13. 23. John 5. 39.

3. Faith must needs proceed from sincerity, and soundness of judgment.

The assent, which upon contemplation, and considering of things, we do yield to them, is usually termed judgment; and it much resembleth that act, whose name it borroweth; for as he is a good judge, who after a full cognisance, and careful discussion of the case with its pleas, doth pronounce freely and fairly, being no way swayed either by his own inclination, or by temptation from without; who is not biased by any previous affection or dislike, not drawn by favour, not daunted by fear, not bribed by profit, not charmed by flattery, not dazzled by specious appearance, not gulled by crafty insinuations, or by fine speech; not tired by solicitation or importunity, not seduced by precedents or custom; not perverted by any such means, which are indirect, impertinent, or extraneous to the cause, so as to give a wrong sentence; so is he that assenteth to Christian truth: many considerations will exempt him from any suspicion of being anywise so corrupted.

For the Gospel cometh under trial in a guise no-wise plausible or advantageous to human conceit : its garb and circumstances are no-wise taking, nor attractive of any favour to it ; but such rather, as are apt to raise dislike and scandal against it ; it being, as St. Paul saith, presented up *in earthen vessels*, in way very homely, and contemptible. It representeth a mean, a poor, a persecuted and crucified man offering salvation, and claiming obedience ; attended by persons of like condition and fortune, urging the same overtures and pretences upon us ; and what impression is such an appearance likely to work upon our fancy, which is prone to affect splendid and pompous shews ?

The same doth not present to us any bribe of gain, doth not tempt us with any hope of preferment, doth not allure us with any bait of pleasure ; but challengeth a free sentence ; and that such an one, which may greatly prejudice our worldly interests, may spoil our profit, may stop our preferment, may dash all our pleasure ; *in the world ye shall have tribulation ; we must through many tribulations enter into the Kingdom of God ; Every one that will live godly in Christ Jesus, must suffer persecution ; If any one will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me* : such are the promises and enticements it useth.

John 16. 33. 17. 14. Acts 14. 22.
1 Pet. 2. 21. 2 Tim. 3. 12. 1 Theff.
3. 3. Phil. 1. 29. Eph. 3. 13. Matt.
16. 24. 10. 38.

Neither doth it sooth or court us by glozing speech, so as to recommend it self to our fancies by raising in us a good conceit of our selves ; but dealeth bluntly and coarsely with us ; faithfully and plainly acquainting us with our own case, involved in its cause ; how grievous sinners we be, how obnoxious to justice we stand ; how worthless we are, how wretched we shall be, excluding that mercy and grace of God, which it tendreth upon its own terms, of confessing our guilt, disclaiming our merit, humbly seeking mercy, forsaking our own ways, and submitting to God's will.

It doth not solicit us in trimm language, nor by sly insinuations doth inveagle us to embrace it, but in downright terms, in a plain drefs of speech, in a resolute strain doth charge us, upon our peril, to do it right, denouncing upon our refusal extremities of wrath and vengeance.

It advanceth pleas against the bent of our temper, which ever is prone to things forbidden, and averse from things enjoined by it : against the prejudices of our mind, which is always apt to approve or to admire things, which it condemneth or vilifieth ; to dislike or despise things, which it commendeth and magnifieth : against the affections of our heart, the dearest objects of whose love, delight and care it would discard and drive from us ; the most unwelcome and disgustful things whereto, it would introduce and bring to us : against our strongest appetites, and most earnest passions ; the violent motions of which it doth curb and check, doth quell, or doth allay : against many temptations, potently drawing us to things from which it reclaimeth, stoutly driving us from things which it recommendeth : against the stream of habitual usage, and the torrent of common example, things so prevalent upon us : in fine, against our selves, such as we naturally are, such as we by education and custom are made ; whom it impeacheth of heinous guilt and enormous folly ; whose conceit and credit it debaseth ; whom it depressoeth into the confines of hell and misery : all within us, all about us do with might and main oppose it ; Our lust, our fancy, our honour, our interest, our reputation, our principles, our customs, our friends, our enemies ; the flesh, the world, the Devil, all combinedly are so many fierce adversaries, so many shrewd advocates, so many clamorous solicitors against its cause.

He therefore, who notwithstanding all these disadvantages determineth in favour of it, must assuredly be a very upright, impartial, and incorrupt judge ; declaring his sense purely according to the dictates of his reason and conscience.

What indeed greater integrity can a man express, than in thus deciding a cause referred to him so much against himself, as he is naturally affected, and it is related to things here ? what greater equity can he shew, than in avowing so harsh, so rough, so unpleasing truths, so little gratifying his own sense or fancy, so little favouring his profit or pleasure ? what greater ingenuity can there be, than to espouse that doctrine, which pincheth our liberty within so narrow

narrow bounds, which layeth such restraints upon our thoughts, our words, our actions; which interdicteth to us so many enjoyments, which exacteth from us so great pains?

4. To the begetting faith there must concur humility, or a readiness to entertain sober and moderate opinions of our selves, together with suitable affections and desires; for he that with hearty perswasion and serious resolution embraceth Christianity, doth thereby stoop to many things very cross to the vain conceit, the proud humour, and haughty stomach of man.

The first step into the Christian state is a sight and sense of our own imperfection, weakness, baseness and misery: we must discern and feel, that our mind is very blind, and our reason very feeble; that our will is very impotent, lame, depraved, prone to evil, and averse from good: that our life is void of merit, and polluted with guilt; that our condition is deplorably sad and wretched; that of our selves we are insufficient to think, or do any good, in order to our recovery, or deliverance; whence we are obliged to sore compunction of spirit for our deeds and our case, to humble confession of our sins and miseries, to earnest supplication for mercy and grace, to heal and rescue us from our sad estate: *Lord, have mercy on me a sinner; what shall I do to be saved? Wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death?* such are the ejaculations of a soul teeming with faith.

2 Cor. 3. 5.

Luke 18. 13.
Acts 16. 30.
Rom. 7. 24.

Naz. Or. 26.
P. 454.

Heb. 11. 8. &c.
ἐμὲ δὲ μὲν
τοῦ ἐξ ἑλπίου.

2 Cor. 10. 5.

He that entreteth into the faith, must therewith entirely submit his understanding, and resign his judgment to God, as his master and guide; being ready to believe whatever God declareth, however to his seeming unintelligible or incredible; to follow whither God conducteth, although like *Abraham* he knoweth not whither he goeth; to approve that which God ordaineth, however distasteful to his sense; to undertake that which God requireth, however difficult; to bear that which God imposeth, how burthensome soever; being content that divine wisdom shall absolutely sway and reign over his wisdom; that his reason shall be puzzled, shall be baffled in many cases; that his mind shall be rifled of all its prejudices, its fond curiosities, its presumptuous confidences, of every thought, and device advancing it self against divine truth.

He must abandon all good opinion of himself, all conceitedness of his own worth, merit, excellency, felicity in any kind; slighting his wealth, his power, his dignity, his wit, his wisdom, and the like advantages, natural or secular, which are so much prized in vulgar and worldly esteem; as things in themselves of no consideration, nor otherwise valuable than as talents entrusted by God, or instruments of his service; disowning them from himself, as things freely dispensed by God, and absolutely depending on his disposal: saying with *St. Paul*, *Yea doubtless I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in him; not having my own righteousness, which is of the law; but that which is through the faith of Christ.*

Phil. 3. 8, 9.

John 15. 18, 19.

1 Pet. 4. 4.
πλῆθος μὲν

He also that cordially doth embrace the Christian doctrine, with resolution of conforming his practice thereto, must look for it to sustain much disgrace; to be hated, to be censured and taxed, to be slighted and scorned, to be reproached, to be spurned as a fool, an Idiot, a humourist, a silly, superstitious, phantastical, morose body, by the world, and the adherents to its corrupt principles, its vitious fashions, its depraved sentiments and practices; *who will wonder* (with indignation and scorn) *at those, who do not run into the same Excess of riot, speaking evil and railing at them: especially in times, when wickedness doth lift up its horn, when profaneness doth not only much prevail, but doth insult, and vapour over piety.*

Every Christian, as such, immediately doth admit notions quite debasing high conceit, which ascribe all our good things purely to divine bounty; which allow us to own nothing but evils springing from our defects, infirmities, and corruptions, from our guilty naughtiness and folly; which display our great imperfection, indigency, impotency, ignorance, error, unworthiness and forlorn wretchedness; which assure, that we do subsist in total dependance upon God, continually needing his protection, succour and mercy.

He must undertake the practice of duties extremely cross to proud humour; to comport with injuries and affronts, without revenge, without resentment of them; to place himself beneath others; to be content with his state, how mean and poor soever; to bear patiently all events incident to him, however sad and grievous; with the like, contrary to the gust of a proud heart.

He that doth thus demean himself, embracing such notions, and complying with such duties, how can he otherwise than be a very humble, sober and modest person?

5. To faith much fortitude, much resolution and courage must conspire: for he that firmly persuadeth himself to be a Christian, doth embark in a most difficult and dreadful warfare; doth undertake most high and hazardous enterprises; doth engage in the boldest adventures, that a man can set upon; he intendeth to encounter most puissant, stout, and fierce enemies; to fight many a bloody battel; to attack many a strong hold, to sustain many a sharp brunt, to endure many sore hardships, to run into many terrible dangers, to break through many tough difficulties, to surmount many great discouragements, impediments and oppositions.

He doth set himself in array against the world, the flesh, and the Devil, that strong confederacy bandied against him with their utmost force of strength and subtilty.

He must combat the world, by its fair looks, flatteries and caresses enticing to sin; by its frowns, menaces and rough treatments deterring from duty, ensnaring us by its profits, its glories, its pleasures; seducing us by its bad customs and examples, distracting us with its cares, and amusements of business.

He must cope with the flesh, that intestine and treacherous foe; which with its corrupt prejudices and imaginations, with its stubborn proclivities, with its impetuous appetites, with its boisterous passions, doth *war against our soul*, striving to bring our minds into captivity under the law of sin, which is in our members.

He must grapple with the Devil, that strong one, that greedy lion, that wily snake, that ruful dragon, always waiting to surprize us, always gaping to devour us, always laying close trains to entrap us, always throwing fiery darts of temptation to consume or scorch us; *Our wrestling* (as the Apostle doth express it) *is against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickednesses in high places.*

In these conflicts he must expect to meet with many a grievous repulse, to bear many a hard knock, to feel many a sore wound; to be often beat back, often knocked down, often thrust through, often trampled on, and insulted over.

To set on these things is surely the highest gallantry that can be; he that hath the heart to attempt and undergo such things, is a daring and brave man indeed; he that successfully can atchieve such exploits, is truly a Heroe; most deserving notable trophies, and everlasting monuments of renown.

The undertakings of *Alexander*, of *Hannibal*, of *Cæsar* did not signifie valour like to this, their atchievements were but toys in comparison to these: those famous gallants would have found it infinitely harder to conquer the world in this way; to have subdued their lusts, and mastered their passions, would have proved far more difficult, than to get advantage in scuffles with armed men; to discomfit legions of Devils, would have been to them another kind of work, than was the vanquishing squadrons of *Persians*, of *Gauls*, of *Romans*: to have set upon their own ambition and vanity, their intemperance, their revenge, to have quelled those inward enemies, to have sustained affronts, disgraces, afflictions, with a calm and contented mind, would have more tried their courage, than all which they attempted; making a great shew, but signifying little of true fortitude.

6. The noble vertue of patience is likewise necessary to faith; thereto all kinds of patience must concur; patience of labour in God's service, and obedience to all his commands; *patience of hope* in waiting for the accomplishment of God's promise; patience of persecution for God's sake, and in conscience of our duty to him; patience of crosses and afflictions by God's Disposal allotted to us for our instruction, our exercise, our probation, our correction and improvement in goodness. For,

Heb. 5. 8. Christianity is the great School, and special Academy of patience, wherein
 Heb. 12. 6. we are informed, are inured, are trained up and tried to bear all things: The
 Matt. 16. 24. cross is the badge of our profession, without willingly carrying which, we can-
 Rom. 8. 29. not be the children of God, or disciples of Christ; whereby we are conformed to
 Isa. 53. 3. the image of our Lord, the man of sorrow, and acquainted with grief: Tribulati-
 1 Thes. 3. 3. on is our lot, to which we are appointed; and to which we are called, persecuti-
 1 Pet. 2. 21. on is the condition, proposed to us; it being told us, that Every one, who will
 1 Tim. 3. 12. live godly in Christ Jesus, must suffer persecution; affliction is the way toward
 Acts 14. 22. our happiness, for by many afflictions we must enter into the Kingdom of heaven;
 Phil. 1. 29. it is represented as a favour granted to us to suffer; for ὑμῶν ἐξαιεσθαι, to you,
 (saith St. Paul) it hath been indulged, not only to believe in Christ, but to suffer
 Eph. 3. 13. for him; it is our glory, our joy, our beatitude. Our work is to run with pati-
 Matt. 5. 11. ence the race that is set before us; in fine, faith and patience are the pair,
 James 1. 2. which being coupled together draw us to the inheritance of the promises; pati-
 James 1. 12. ence being needful to introduce and support faith.
 1 Pet. 4. 14.
 3. 14.
 Heb. 12. 1. Heb. 6. 12. Apoc. 13. 10. Heb. 10. 36. Luke 21. 19.

7. With faith also must concur the vertue of prudence; in all its parts and instances: therein is exerted a sagacity, discerning things as they really are in themselves, not as they appear through the masks and disguises of fallacious semblance, whereby they would delude us; not suffering us to be abused by the gaudy shews, the false glosses, the tempting allurements of things; therein we must use discretion in prizing things rightly, according to their true nature and intrinsick worth; in chusing things really good, and rejecting things truly evil, however each kind may seem to our erroneous sense; therein we must have a good prospect extending it self to the final consequences of things, so that looking over present contingencies we descry what certainly will befall us through the course of eternal ages.

In faith is exercised that prudence, which guideth and prompteth us to walk by the best rules, to act in the best manner, to apply the best means toward attainment of the best ends.

The prudence of faith is indeed the only prudence considerable; all other prudence regarding objects very low and ignoble, tending to designs very mean or base, having fruits very poor or vain: To be wise about affairs of this life (these fleeting, these empty, these deceitful shadows) is a sorry wisdom; to be wise in purveying for the flesh, is the wisdom of a beast, which is wise enough to prog for its sustenance; to be wise in gratifying fancy, is the wisdom of a child, who can easily entertain and please himself with trifles; to be wise in contriving mischief, or embroiling things is the wisdom of a Fiend, in which the old serpent, or grand politician of hell doth exceed all the Machiavels in the world; this (as St. James saith) is earthly, sensual, devilish wisdom; but the wisdom of faith, or that wisdom, which is from above, is first pure, then peaceable; gentle, easie to be entreated, full of mercy and good works.

8. In fine, the embracing Christian doctrine doth suppose a mind imbued with all kinds of vertuous disposition in some good degree; for seeing that doctrine doth highly commend, and strictly prescribe all Vertue, he must needs be a friend to all vertue, and a devoted servant thereto, who can heartily approve, and like it: his eye must be sound, and clear from mists of bad prejudice, who can ken the beauty, and bear the lustre of it; his palate must be pure from vitious tinctures who can relish its sweetness, his heart must be void of corrupt affections and desires, who sincerely doth affect it, and firmly doth cleave thereto: his conscience must be good, who can hope for the excellent rewards which it proposeth, who can stand proof against the terrible menaces it denounceth; his intentions must be upright, who dareth offer them to be scann'd by so exact rules; his life must in good measure be blameless, who can present it before the bar of so rigorous judgment; he must be a man of much goodness, ingenuity and integrity, who can think it expedient, who can be content and willing that such a doctrine be accounted true, which so plainly discountenanceth, which so peremptorily condemneth, which so severely punisheth all kinds of wickedness; for He (as our Saviour saith, and he alone) who doeth the truth, doth come to the light, that his

his deeds may be manifested. Faith therefore, and good conscience are well by St. Paul so often coupled, as inseparable associates.

1 Tim. i. 5.
1. 19. 3. 9.

Where now are they, who wonder, that faith is so commended, doth find such acceptance with God, and is so crowned with reward; who would banish it from the company of virtues, and out of all moral consideration; who would have it taken for an involuntary act, forced on the mind, and issuing from dry speculation? for, seeing so many excellent dispositions of soul are its ingredients, essentially connected with it, seeing so many noble acts of will do concur to its production, seeing it hath so many choice virtues inseparably adherent, as previous or concomitant to it; it is no wonder that they should moralize it, should render it very considerable, so capable of praise, so worthy of recompence.

If we therefore do believe, because we will apply our minds to regard our best concerns, because we will yield due attention to the declarations and overtures of God, because we will take the pains to weigh the reasons persuasive of truth, because we look on things with an indifferent eye, and judge uprightly about them; because we have the courage, the patience, the prudence, the innocence, requisite for avowing such truths; then surely faith is voluntary, and therefore very commendable.

Whoever indeed will consider the nature of man, or will consult obvious experience, shall find, that in all practical matters, our will, or appetite hath a mighty influence upon our judgment of things; causing men with great attention to regard that which they affect, and carefully to mark all reasons making for it; but averting from that which they dislike, and making them to overlook the arguments which persuade it; whence men generally do sute their opinions to their inclinations; warping to that side where their interest doth lie, or to which their complexion, their humour, their passions, their pleasure, their ease doth sway them; so that almost any notion will seem true, which is profitable, which is safe, which is pleasant, or any-wise grateful to them; that notion false, which in any such respect doth cross them; very few can abstract their minds from such considerations, or embrace pure truth, divested of them; and those few, who do so, must therein most employ their will, by strong efforts of voluntary resolution and patience disengaging their minds from those clogs and byasses. This is particularly notorious in mens adherence to Parties, divided in opinion, which is so regulated by that sort of causes, that if you do mark what any man's temper is, and where his interest lieth, you may easily prognosticate on what side he will be; and with what degree of seriousness, of vigour, of zeal, he will cleave thereto: a timorous man you may be almost sure will be on the safer side; a covetous man will bend to that party, where gain is to be had; an ambitious man will close with the opinion passing in Court; a careless man will comply with the fashion; affection arising from education, or prejudice will hold others stiff; few do follow the results of impartial contemplation.

— facile
qua credita
profunt Credimus —

All faith therefore even in common things may be deemed voluntary, no less than intellectual; and Christian faith is especially such, as requiring thereto more application of soul, managed by choice, than any other; whence the Ancients in their description of it, do usually include this condition, supposing it not to be a bare assent of the understanding, but a free consent of the will: Faith (saith Clemens Alex.) is a spontaneous acceptance, and compliance with divine religion; and, To be made at first was not in our power; but God persuaded us to follow those things, which he liketh, chusing by the rational faculties, which he hath given us, and so leadeth us to faith; saith Justin the Martyr.

πιστις πειθαρχία
ἡ ἐκείνου
θεοσεβείας
συγκατάθεσις,
&c.
Clem. Strom.
2. p. 265.

Ἐδελοντῶν συνέπειας τοῦ συμφέροντος συνείσεως ἀρχή, Ibid. Τὸ μὲν ἀρχὴν γενέσθαι ἡμεῖς οὐκ ἐξαναλογισάμεθα οἷς φίλον αὐτῷ ἀρεμῆναι δι' ὃν αὐτὸς ἐδωρήσατο λογικῶν δυνάμεων πείθει τε καὶ εἰς πίστιν ἀγείρει ἡμᾶς. Just. M. Apol. 2. (p. 58.)

The same is supposed in holy Scripture; where of believers it is said, that they did ἀσμένως, gladly, or willingly receive the word, and they received it μετὰ πᾶσι θυμῶν, with all willingness, or readiness of mind.

Acts 2. 41.
Acts 17. 11.

And to defect of will infidelity is often ascribed: Te will not come unto me (saith John 5. 40. our Saviour) that ye might have life; and, How often would I have gathered thy children together as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not?

Luke 13. 34.

Matt. 22. 3. and, *The Kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain King, which made a marriage for his son, and sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding, and they would not come: and, Of this (saith St. Peter of some profane infidels) they are willingly ignorant, that by the word of God the heavens were of old; and of the like St. Paul saith, that they received not the love of the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.*

2 Pet. 3. 5. *Indeed to prevent this exception, that faith is a forced act, and therefore not moral; or to render it more voluntary, and worthy, God hath not done all that he might have done to convince men, or to wring belief from them: he hath not stamped on his truth that glaring evidence, which might dazzle our minds; he doth not propose it armed with irresistible cogency, he hath not made the objects of faith conspicuous to sense, nor the propositions thereof demonstrable by reason, like theoremes of Geometry; this indeed would be to depose faith, to devalue it of its excellency, and bereave it of its praise; this were to deprive us of that blessedness, which is adjudged to those, who believe and do not see: this would prostitute Wisdom to be deflowered by the foolish; and expose truth to be rifled by the profane: this would take from our reason its noblest exercise, and fairest occasion of improvement; this would confound persons fit to be distinguished, the sagacious and the stupid, the diligent and the slothful, the ingenuous and the froward, the sober and the vain, the pious and the profane; the children of wisdom, which are apt to justify it, and the sons of folly, who hate knowledge; the friends of truth and virtue, and the lovers of falsehood and unrighteousness.*

John 20. 29. *God therefore hath exhibited his truth, shining through some mists of difficulty and doubt, that only those who have clear eyes, who do look attentively, who are willing to see, may discern it; that those who have eyes may see, and those who have ears may hear. He meaneth this way of discovering his mind for a test to prove our ingenuity, for a field to exercise our industry, for an occasion to express his goodness in crowning the wisdom and virtue of good believers; that—the trial of your faith (saith St. Peter) being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise, and honour, and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ; whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory. He meaneth also thence to display his justice in punishing the slothful, the vain, the perverse, the profane; that (as the Apostle saith) all men might be judged, who believed not the truth—but had pleasure in unrighteousness: Hence, there must of necessity be scandals, saith our Saviour; hence our Lord was set for a mark to be contradicted, that the thoughts of many hearts might be revealed; and, there must be heresies; saith St. Paul; why? that they which are approved (οἱ δοκίμοι, persons that can bear the test) may be manifested.*

Matt. 11. 15. *God dealeth with us, as he did with his ancient people; he to assure them of his gracious protection and providence over them; or to persuade them of the truth of what he by Moses taught them, did before their eyes perform stupendious works in their behalf, affording them miraculous deliverances from their enemies, and prodigious supplies of their needs; the sight of which did extort a temporary belief; then (it is said) they believed his words, and sang his praise; and, when Israel saw that great work which the Lord did upon the Egyptians, the people feared the Lord, and believed the Lord, and his servant Moses. Yet withal God suffered divers things to fall out, to humble them (as it is said) and to prove them, and to know what was in their heart, whether they would keep his commandments, or no: The result of which dispensations was, that they being inconsiderate, impatient and refractory, believed not in God, and trusted not in his salvation; they despised that pleasant land, and gave no credence to his word; So God dealt with that typical people; and in like manner doth he proceed with us; he hath ministered signal attestations to the Gospel; he hath dispensed arguments abundantly sufficient to convince well disposed minds of its truth; but he hath not cleared it from all scruples, which may disturb the froward or the delicate; he hath not exempted it from all scandals, which may disgust the perverse, and stubborn; he hath not prevented all exceptions or cavils devisable by curious or captious wits against it; he hath not guarded it*

Matt. 11. 15. *and those who have ears may hear. He meaneth this way of discovering his mind for a test to prove our ingenuity, for a field to exercise our industry, for an occasion to express his goodness in crowning the wisdom and virtue of good believers; that—the trial of your faith (saith St. Peter) being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise, and honour, and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ; whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory. He meaneth also thence to display his justice in punishing the slothful, the vain, the perverse, the profane; that (as the Apostle saith) all men might be judged, who believed not the truth—but had pleasure in unrighteousness: Hence, there must of necessity be scandals, saith our Saviour; hence our Lord was set for a mark to be contradicted, that the thoughts of many hearts might be revealed; and, there must be heresies; saith St. Paul; why? that they which are approved (οἱ δοκίμοι, persons that can bear the test) may be manifested.*

Plal. 78. 105, 106. *God dealeth with us, as he did with his ancient people; he to assure them of his gracious protection and providence over them; or to persuade them of the truth of what he by Moses taught them, did before their eyes perform stupendious works in their behalf, affording them miraculous deliverances from their enemies, and prodigious supplies of their needs; the sight of which did extort a temporary belief; then (it is said) they believed his words, and sang his praise; and, when Israel saw that great work which the Lord did upon the Egyptians, the people feared the Lord, and believed the Lord, and his servant Moses. Yet withal God suffered divers things to fall out, to humble them (as it is said) and to prove them, and to know what was in their heart, whether they would keep his commandments, or no: The result of which dispensations was, that they being inconsiderate, impatient and refractory, believed not in God, and trusted not in his salvation; they despised that pleasant land, and gave no credence to his word; So God dealt with that typical people; and in like manner doth he proceed with us; he hath ministered signal attestations to the Gospel; he hath dispensed arguments abundantly sufficient to convince well disposed minds of its truth; but he hath not cleared it from all scruples, which may disturb the froward or the delicate; he hath not exempted it from all scandals, which may disgust the perverse, and stubborn; he hath not prevented all exceptions or cavils devisable by curious or captious wits against it; he hath not guarded it*

it wholly from the malicious opposition of those, whose interest it might seem, in favour of their vices and follies, to impugn it; just it was, that to such the Gospel should be *a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence; who stumble at the word, being disobedient, unto which they were appointed* (that is, God having so purposely ordered the Evangelical dispensation, that such persons should not approve it, or comply with it) just it was, that they should be debarred from a knowledge of that truth, which they should abuse, and *detain in unrighteousness*; just it was, that they should be punished with such temptations unto doubt and error, *who would not receive the love of the truth; that they might be saved.* 1 Pet. 2. 7, 8.
Rom. 1. 18, 28.
2 Thes. 2. 10, 11, 12.

Indeed, more abundant light of conviction, as it would deprive good men of much praise and reward, so it might be hurtful to many persons; who having affections indisposed to comply with truth, would outface and outbrave it, however clear and evident; *they would* (as *Job* speaketh) *rebel against the light*, although shining on them with a meridian splendour: they would plunge themselves into an inexcusable, and incorrigible state of impiety, *doing despite to the spirit of grace*, and involving themselves in the *unpardonable sin*; as we have many instances in the Evangelical History of those, who beholding unquestionable evidences of divine power attesting to our Lord's doctrine, which they could not but acknowledge, did yet oppose it, did blaspheme against it, did outrageously persecute it. Job 24. 14.
Heb. 10. 29.
Matt. 12. 31, 45.
Matt. 9. 34.
Luke 13. 17.
John 11. 47.
12. 37. 9. 28.
Acts 4. 16.

Should God, as he once did in a dreadful manner, thunder out his laws, and shake the earth with his voice, yet many would little regard them: should God in confirmation of his will perform every day as many miracles, as he did once in *Egypt*, yet there would be *Pharaohs*, *hardning their hearts* against it; should God himself descend from heaven, as once he did, and converse with us, instructing us by discourse and practice, displaying among us conspicuous evidences of his power and goodness, yet *who would believe his report, to whom would the arm of the Lord be revealed?* how few cordially would embrace his doctrine, or submit to his Law? as it was then, so it would be now; he would be hated, be scorned, be affronted and abused, by persons qualified with like affections, as those were, who so then did serve him; for in all times like persons will do like things: as then only *his sheep* (that is, well disposed persons, like *sheep*, simple, harmless and ductile) *did hear his voice, and follow him*; so others would not believe him, because they were not of his sheep, being imbued with swinish, currish, wolfish dispositions, incapacitating them to follow his conduct; there would be persons like to those, of whom it is said, *Behold ye scorners, and wonder, and perish, for I work a work in your days, a work which you shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you.* Heb. 12. 18, 26.
John 12. 38.
Rom. 10. 16.
John 10. 27.
John 10. 26.
Acts 13. 41.

(It is with instituted Religion, as it is with natural; the works of nature are so many continual miracles of divine power and wisdom; in the common track of providence many wonderful things do occur; yet who by them is moved to acknowledge and adore God? notwithstanding them, how many *Atheists* and *Epicureans* are there? so will it be in regard to divine Revelations, which however clearly attested, will yet be questioned.)

Those indeed whom sufficient reasons (such as God hath dispensed to us) will not convince, upon them the greatest motives would have small efficacy; so Father *Abraham* told the rich man — *If they hear not Moses, and the Prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.* Γνώμης χρεῖα
εὐγνώμονος,
καὶ μὴ αὐτῶ
παρὲν σημεῖον
John 5. 47.

ωρ εἰδέν ὁφελος. Chrys. in Matt. Or. 43. Luke 16. 30. John 5. 47.

They may pretend, if they had more light, they would be persuaded; like those who said, *Let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe*; but it would not in effect prove so, for they would yet be devising shifts, and forging exceptions; or however they would oppose an impudent face, and an obstinate will against the truth. Matt. 27. 42.

Wherefore it was for the common good, and to divine wisdom it appeared sufficient, that upon the balance truth should much outweigh falsehood, if the scales were held in an even hand, and no prejudices were thrown in against it; that it should be conspicuous enough to eyes, which do not avert themselves from it, or wink on purpose, or be clouded with lust and passion; it was enough Acts 28. 27.

enough that infidelity is justly chargeable on mens wilful pravity; and that
 John 15. 22. *περὶ οὗτων ἐκ ἔχουσιν, they have not* (as our Saviour saith) *any reasonable excuse*
 for it.

But so much for the causes and adjuncts of Faith; the effects and consequences of it I reserve for another occasion.

I Believe, &c.

S E R M O N III.

OF THE

Vertue and Reasonableness

OF

F A I T H.

II PET. I. 1.

----- To them that have obtained like precious faith with us.

OF all Christian virtues, as there is none more approved and dignified by God, so there is none less considered or valued by men than Faith; the Adversaries of our Religion have always had a special pique at it; wondering that it should be commanded, as if it were an arbitrary thing or in our choice to believe what we please; why it should be commended, as if it were praise-worthy to be subdued by reason; either by that which is too strong for us to resist, or by that which is too weak to conquer us.

But that Faith worthily deserveth the praises and privileges assigned thereto, we may be satisfied, if we do well consider its nature and ingredients, its causes and rise, its effects and consequences.

In its nature it doth involve knowledge, or the possession of truth, which is the natural food, the proper wealth, the special ornament of our soul; knowledge of truths most worthy of us, and important to us, as conversing about the highest objects, and conducing to the noblest use; knowledge peculiar and not otherwise attainable, as lying without the sphere of our sense, and beyond the reach of our reason; knowledge conveyed to us with great evidence and assurance; the greatest indeed that well can be, considering the nature of its objects, and the general capacities of men, and the most proper way of working upon reasonable natures.

It implieth (that which giveth to every vertue its form and worth) a good use of our reason, in carefully weighing, and uprightly judging about things, of greatest concernment to us; it implieth a closing with God's providence dispensing opportunities, and representing motives serving to beget it; a compliance with God's grace attracting and inclining our souls to embrace his heavenly truth:

truth: it implyeth also good opinions of God, and good affections toward him, which are requisite to the believing (upon his testimony, promise, or command) points very sublime, very difficult, very cross to our fancy and humour.

The causes also, which concur in its production, are very excellent; many vertuous dispositions of soul are requisite to the conception and birth of it: there must be a sober, composed and wakeful mind, inquisitive after truth, apt to observe its starting, and ready to lay hold on it; there must be diligence and industry in attending to the proposals, and considering the enforcements of it; there must be sincerity and soundness of judgment, in avowing its cause, against the exceptions raised against it by prejudice and carnal conceit, by sensual appetites and passions, by temptations and worldly interest: there must be great humility, disposing us to a submission of our understanding, and a resignation of our will unto God, in admitting notions which debase haughty conceit, in espousing duties which repress sturdy humour: there must be much resolution and courage in undertaking things very difficult, hazardous and painful; much patience, in adhering to a profession, which exacteth so much pain, and exposeth to so much trouble: there must be great prudence, in applying our choice (among so many competitions and pretences claiming it) to that which is only good; in seeing through fallacious disguises, and looking over present appearances, so as to descry the just worth, and the final consequence of things: there must in fine be a love of truth, and a liking of all vertue, which is so highly commended, and so strictly prescribed by the Christian doctrine.

These particulars, commending Faith to us, I have already largely prosecuted; I shall only therefore now insist upon the last Head, concerning its effects, whereby (as the goodness of a tree is known by its fruits) the great excellency thereof will appear.

Its effects are of two sorts, one springing naturally from it, the other following it in way of recompence, from divine bounty; I shall only touch the first sort; because in this its vertue is most seen, as in the other its felicity.

Faith is naturally efficacious in producing many rare fruits; naturally I say, not meaning to exclude supernatural grace, but supposing Faith to be a fit instrument thereof; for *God worketh in us to will, and to do*, but in a way futable to our nature, employing such means as properly serve to incline and excite us unto good practice; and such is Faith, supported and wielded by his grace; for (Acts 11. 24.) indeed

Even in common life Faith is the compass by which men steer their practice, and the main spring of action, setting all the wheels of our activity on going: every man acteth with serious intention, and with vigour answerable to his persuasion of things, that they are worthy his pains, and attainable by his endeavours; what moveth the husbandman to employ so much care, toil and expence in manuring his ground, in plowing, in sowing, in weeding, in fencing it; but a persuasion that he shall reap a crop, which in benefit will answer all? what stirreth up the merchant to undertake tedious voyages over vast and dangerous seas, adventuring his stock, abandoning his ease, exposing his life to the waves, to rocks and shelves, to storms and hurricanes, to cruel pirates, to sweltry heats and piercing colds, but a persuasion, that wealth is a very desirable thing, and that hereby he may acquire it? what induceth a man to conform unto strictest rules of diet and abstinence, readily to swallow down the most unsavory potions, patiently to endure cuttings and burnings, but a faith that he thereby shall recover or preserve health, that highly valuable good? from the same principle are all the carking, all the plodding, all the drudging, all the daring, all the scuffling in the world easily derivable: In like manner is Faith the square and the source of our spiritual activity, disposing us seriously to undertake, earnestly, resolutely, industriously and constantly to pursue the designs of vertue and piety; brooking the pains and hardships, breaking through the difficulties and hazards, which occur in religious practice; engaging us to the performance of duty, deterring us from the commission of sin.

What but Faith eyeing *the prize*, will quicken us to *run patiently the race that is set before us*? what but Faith apprehending *the crown*, will animate us to *fight stoutly the good fight*? what but Faith assuring the wages, will support us in *working all the day with unwearied industry and patience*? what can raise pious

Heb. 12. 1.
Phil. 3. 14.
1 Cor. 9. 24.
25.
2 Tim. 4. 7.
1 Tim. 1. 8.
hope, 6. 7.

hope, what can kindle holy desire, what can spurr on conscientious endeavour, but a faith of attaining worthy recompences for doing well? what can impress an effectual dislike and dread of offending, but a faith of incurring grievous punishment and sad mischiefs thence?

In reason, a strong and steady belief but of one point or two, would suffice to engage us upon all duty, and to restrain us from all sin: did we only believe the future judgment, with the results of it, that alone would be an effectual both spurr and curb to us: for who believing that his soul then shall be laid bare, that his inmost thoughts and secretest purposes shall be disclosed unto the view of all the world, will presume to harbour in his breast any foul thought, or base design? who believing, that he shall then be obliged to render an account of *every idle word*, will dare to utter villainous blasphemies, wicked curses, fond oaths, profane jests, vile slanders or detractions, harsh censures, or bitter reproaches? who being perswaded, that a rigorous amends will then be exacted from him for any wrong he doeth, will not be afraid with violence to oppress, or with fraud to circumvent his neighbour? who deeming himself accountable then for every talent and opportunity, will find in his heart to squander away or misemploy his time, his power, his wealth, his credit, his wit, his knowledge, his advantages in any kind of doing God service? who knowing himself obnoxious to a sudden trial, whereat his estate, his reputation, his life, all his interest and welfare must lie at stake, will contentedly lose his mind in wanton sports, or wild frolicks? in fine, if we are really perswaded, that presently after this short and transitory life, we shall openly in the face of God, Angels and Men, be arraigned at an impartial bar, where all our thoughts, our words, our actions shall most exactly be sifted and scanned, according to which cognisance a just doom shall be pronounced, and certainly executed upon us; how must this needs engage us to be very sober and serious, very circumspect and vigilant over our mind, our tongue, our dealings or conversation, our whole life?

Again, If a man firmly believeth, that by a pious course of life, he shall gain the present favour and friendship of the Almighty, with all the real goods, whereof he is capable; and that hereafter he shall be rewarded for it with an eternal life in perfect rest, in glory, in joy, in beatitude unspeakable; that he shall obtain *an incorruptible inheritance, a treasure that can never fail, a crown that will not fade, a kingdom that cannot be shaken*; wherein he shall enjoy the blissful vision of God, smiling in love upon him; the presence of his gracious Redeemer, embracing him with dear affection; the most delightful Society of blessed Angels, and *just spirits made perfect*; a state of felicity, surpassing all words to express it, all thoughts to conceive it; of which the brightest splendours, and the choicest pleasures here, can yield but a faint resemblance; how can he forbear earnestly to embrace and pursue such a course of practice? what zeal must such a persuasion inspire, what vigour must it rouse within him? who upon any terms would forfeit the hopes of such a happiness? who would not be glad to undertake any pains, or endure any hardships for it?

And who likewise heartily is perswaded, that by vitious conversation he shall incur the wrath of Almighty God, and stand obnoxious to the strokes of his severe justice; that persisting therein, he infallibly must drop into the bottomless pit, into that utter darkness, that furnace of fire unquenchable, that lake of flaming brimstone; where is weeping and gnashing of teeth, where the immortal worm shall gnaw on his heart, and he must feel the pangs of a never-dying death; that state of most bitter remorse, of most horrid despair, of most forlorn disconsolateness, of continual and endless torment; wherein he shall be banished from the face of God, and by immutable destiny barr'd from all light, all ease, all solace; from any glimpse of hope, from any respite of pain; the wretchedness of which condition, not the sharpest pain of body, not the forest anguish of mind, not the saddest distress here can any-wise reach, or represent: whoever, I say, is possessed with a belief of these things consequent on a wicked life, will he not thence be effectually scared from it? what bait of temptation shall allure him, what force shall drive him thereto? will he for a flash of pleasure, for a puff of fame, for a lump of pelf; will he in complement or complaisance to others, in apish imitation or compliance with a fashion, out of mere wanton-

1 Pet. 1. 4.
Luke 12. 33.
1 Pet. 5. 4.
Heb. 12. 28.

1 Cor. 2. 9.

Matt. 18. 30. Jud. 6. 2 Pet. 2. 4.
Luke 4. 31. Apoc. 20. 3. Matt. 8.
12. 13. 42, 50. Mark 9. 43, 45.
(11. 33. 14.) Rev. 20. 21.

Mat. 9. 44.
Apoc. 20. 10.
Dan. 12. 2.
Everlasting
shame.
2 Thes. 1. 9.
Rom. 2. 9.
5507.

wantonness, or in regard to some petty interest; will he in hope of any worldly good, or fear of any inconvenience here, suffer himself to be cast into that dismal state? will he not sooner go and shake a Lion by the paw, sooner provoke an Adder to bite him, sooner throw himself down a precipice, or leap into a caldron of burning pitch? certainly; in reason, to believe such things, and to sin, can hardly be consistent.

Such a general influence is faith, looking with a provident eye upon future rewards and consequences of things, apt to have upon our practice: the which collaterally taking in the glorious attributes of God, the gracious performances of our Saviour, the beauty and sweetness of each divine precept, the manifold obligations and encouragements to duty, the whole latitude and harmony of evangelical truth, all tending to the recommendation of holiness, what efficacy must it needs have? how powerfully must it incite us to good practice?

We are told, that faith doth *purify our souls*, and *cleanse our hearts*; that is, ^{ἀγνίζει τὴν} our whole interior man, all the faculties of our soul; disposing them to an ^{καρδίαν} universal obedience and conformity to God's holy will: And so it is; for Faith ^{1. 22.} not only doth clear our understanding from its defects (blindness, ignorance, ^{καθαρίζει} error, doubt) but it cleanseth our will from its vitious inclinations, from stub- ^{15. 9.} born, froward, wanton, giddy humours; it freeth our affections from disorder and distemper, in tendency toward bad objects, and in pursuit of indifferent things with immoderate violence; it purgeth our conscience, or reflexive powers, from anxious fear, suspicion, anguish, dejection, despair, and all such passions which corrode and fret the soul. How it effecteth this, we might declare; but we cannot better set forth its efficacy and puissance, than by considering the special and immediate influence it plainly hath in the production of each virtue, or on the performance of every duty: *Add to your faith virtue*, faith St. Peter; ^{2. Pet. 1. 5.} implying the natural order of things, and that if true faith precede virtue will ^{1. Tim. 6. 11.} ^{2. Tim. 2. 22.} easily follow.

The chief of all virtues *piety* (comprising the love of God, fear and reverence of him, confidence in him, gratitude for his favours and mercies, devotion toward him, a disposition to worship and serve him) seemeth according to reason inevitably consequent from it; for can we believe God superexcellent in all perfection, and immensely benign toward us; can we be perswaded, that in free goodness he did create us, and doth continually preserve us in being; that his bounty hath conferred on us all our endowments of soul, and all our accommodations of life; that he hath a tender desire of our welfare, from which even our most heinous offences and provocations cannot divert him; that he most wonderfully hath provided for our happiness; in order thereto, when we had rebelled and revolted from him, sending down out of his bosom, from the top of celestial glory and bliss, his only dear Son, into this base and frail state, to sustain the infirmities of our nature, the inconveniences of a poor life, the pains of a bitter and shameful death, for our recovery from sin and misery; that with infinite patience he driveth on this gracious design, continually watching over us, attracting us to good, and reclaiming us from evil by his grace, notwithstanding our frequent and stiff reluctances thereto; can, I say, we heartily believe these points, and not love him? can the eye of faith behold so lovely beauty, so ravishing sweetness in him, and the heart not be affected? can we apprehend so many miracles of nature, of providence, of grace performed by him for our sake, and not be thankful to him? Can we likewise believe God infinitely powerful, infinitely just, infinitely pure, and withal not dread him, not adore him? Can we believe him most able, most willing, most ready to do us good; and not confide in him? or can we take him to be most veracious, most faithful, most constant, and not rely on his promises? Can we avow him to be our Maker, our Patron, our Lord, our Judge, and not deem our selves much obliged, much concerned to serve him? Can we believe, that God in our need is accessible, that he calleth and inviteth us to him, that he is ever willing and ever ready to hear us, that he is by promise engaged to grant us whatever we do with humble fervency and constancy request; yet forbear to pray, or easily desist from it? do we believe his omnipresence and omniscience; that he is with us, wherever we go; doth know all we think, hear all we say, see all we do; and will not belief engage us to think honestly, to speak reverently, to act innocently and

decently before him? do we believe, that God's commands do proceed from that will, to which rectitude is essential; from that wisdom, which infallibly discerneth what is just and fit; from that goodness, which will require from us nothing but what is best for us; from that unquestionable and uncontrollable authority, to which all things are subject, and must submit; will not this sufficiently engage us to obedience? surely the real belief (such as we have about common things, apprehended by our reason or by our sense) of any such divine act, or attribute, cannot fail to strike pious affection, and pious awe into us.

After piety, the next great virtue is *charity*, the which also is easily derived 2 Tim. i. 15. *from a pure heart* (as St. Paul speaketh) *and faith unfeigned*: it representing peculiar obligations and inducements thereto, from the most peremptory commands of God, from the signal recompences annexed to that duty, from the strict relations between Christians, from the stupendous patterns of charity set before us. Who can withhold love from him, whom he believeth his brother, in a way far nobler than that of nature, so constituted by God himself, the common Father, by spiritual regeneration, and adoption of grace; whom he believeth born of the same heavenly seed, renewed after the same divine image, quickned by the same holy Spirit; united to him not only in blood, but in soul; resembling him not in temper of body or lineaments of face, but in conformity of judgment and practice; partner of the one inheritance, and destinated to lead a life with him through all eternity, in peaceful consortship of joy and bliss? Who can deny him love, whom he believeth out of the same miserable case by the same price redeemed into the same state of mercy? for whom he by faith vieweth the common Saviour divesting himself of glory, pinching himself with want, wearying himself with labour, loaded with contumelies, groaning under pain, weltring in blood, and breathing out his soul, propounding all this as an example of our charity, and demanding it from us as the most special instance of our grateful obedience to him? what greater endearments can be imagined, what more potent incentives of love, what more indissoluble bands of friendship, than are these? Can such a believer forbear to wish his neighbour well, to have complacence in his good, to sympathize with his adversities, to perform all offices of kindness to him? can he in the need of his brother *shut up his bowels of compassion*, or withhold his hand from relieving him? Can a man know that God requireth this practice as the noblest fruit of our faith, and most acceptable part of our obedience, which he hath promised to crown with most ample rewards? can he believe, that God will recompence his *labour of love* with everlasting rest, and for a small expence of present goods will bestow immense treasures in the other world; and yet abstain from charitable beneficence? who can forbear sowing, that believeth he shall reap so plentiful a crop? or abstain from dealing in that heavenly trade, whereby he is assured to be so vast a gainer?

In like manner is Faith productive of *meekness*, in comporting with injuries, discourtesies, neglects and provocations of any kind: for who can be fiercely angry, who can entertain any rancorous grudge or displeasure against him, whom he believeth his brother, and that upon so many accounts he is obliged to love him? Who that believeth God hath pardoned him so much, and doth continually bear so many wrongs, so many indignities from him, will not in conscience, and gratitude toward God, and in compliance with so great an Example, bear with the infirmities of his neighbour? who can look upon the pattern of his Saviour, patiently enduring so many grievous affronts, without a disposition to imitate him, and to do the like for his sake? who that taketh himself for a child of God, a citizen of heaven, an heir of eternal glory, can be so much concerned in any trivial accident here; can design to have his passion stirred for any worldly respect; as if his honour could be impaired, or his interest suffer diminution by any thing said or done here below.

Again, Faith is the mother of *sincerity*, that comprehensive virtue, which seasoneth all other virtues, and keepeth them sound: for it assuring us, that an all-seeing eye doth view our heart, doth *encompass our paths*, is present to all our closest retirements; that *all things are naked and open to the eyes of him, with whom we have to do*, how vain must it appear to us any-wise to dissemble, or prevaricate, speaking otherwise than we think, acting otherwise than we pretend, seeming otherwise than we are, concealing our real intents, or disguising them

them under masks of deceitful appearance? If we believe, that we shall be judged not according to the opinions of men concerning us, or our port and garb in this world, but as we are in our selves, and according to strictest truth; that in the close of things we shall be set forth in our right colours and complexion, all varnish being wiped away; that all our thoughts, words and deeds shall be exposed to most publick censure; that hypocrisie will be a sore aggravation of our sin, and much encrease our shame? how can we satisfie our selves otherwise than in the pure integrity of our heart, and clear uprightness of our dealing?

Likewise the admirable vertue of *humility*, or sobriety of mind doth sprout from Faith; informing us, that we have nothing of our own to boast of, but that all the good we have, we can do, we may hope for are debts we owe to God's pure bounty and mercy; prompting us to assume nothing to our selves, but to ascribe all the honour of our endowments, of our performances, of our advantages unto God; keeping us in continual dependance upon God for the succours of his providence, and his grace; representing to us our natural weakness, vileness and wretchedness, together with the adventitious defects and disadvantages from our wilful misbehaviour, the unworthiness of our lives, the many heinous sins we have committed, and the grievous punishments we have deserved.

He who by the light of faith doth see, that he came naked into the world, heir to nothing but the sad consequences of the original Apostacy; that he is a worm, crawling on earth, feeding on dust, and tending to corruption; that he liveth only by reprieve, from that fatal sentence, *the day thou sinnest thou shalt die*; that he was a caitiff wretch, a mere slave to sin, a forlorn captive of hell; and that all his recovery thence, or capacity of a better state is wholly due to mercy; that he subsisteth only upon alms, and hath nothing but his sins and miseries, which he may call his own; he that believeth these things, what conceit can he have of himself, what confidence in his own worth, what complacency in his estate?

Faith also doth engage to the vertue of *temperance*; discovering not only the duty, but the necessity thereof, in regard to our state, which is a state of continual exercise and strife; wherefore as wrestlers with many strong adversaries, as racers for a noble prize, we by good diet and constant labour must keep our selves in heart, in temper, in breath to perform those combats; according to that of St. Paul, *Every man that striveth for the Mastery, is temperate in all things.* 1 Cor. 9. 25.

Again, Faith is productive of *contentedness* in our state: for How is it possible, that he, who is fully satisfied, that God appointeth his station, and alloteth his portion to each one; that all occurrences depend on his will, and are managed by his providence, should take any thing amiss; as if it could hap better, than as infinite goodness pleaseth, and infinite wisdom determineth? how can he, that believeth God most powerful and able, most kind and willing; ever present and ready to help him, be in any case disconsolate, or despair of seasonable relief? what can discompose him, who knoweth himself, if he pleaseth, immoveably happy; that his best good is secure from all attacks and beyond the reach of any misfortune; that desiring what is best, he cannot fail of his desire; that (himself excepted) all the world cannot considerably wrong, or hurt him?

He that is assured, those precepts, (*Be careful for nothing, Cast all your burden on God, Be content with such things as ye have*) were not given to mock and gull us; that those declarations and promises (*There is no want to them that fear God; No good thing will God withhold from them that walk uprightly; There shall no evil happen to the just; The desire of the righteous shall be granted; All things work together for good to them who love God; Seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you*) were seriously made, and will surely be performed, how loose must his mind be from all solicitude and anxiety? how steady a calm, how sweet a serenity will that faith spread over his soul, in regard to all worldly contingencies?

It will also beget a chearful *tranquillity* of mind, and *peace of conscience*, in regard to our future state; that which St. Paul calleth *all joy and peace in believing,* Rom. 15. 13.

Heb. 3. 6. *living*, which the Apostle to the *Hebrews* termeth *the confidence, and rejoicing*
 9. 14. *of hope*, of which St. *Peter* saith, *believing ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full*
 1 Pet. 1. 8. *of glory*: for he that is persuaded that God (in whose disposal his fortune, and
 felicity are) is reconciled and kindly affected toward him, that he doth con-
 cern himself in designing and procuring his salvation; that to purchase the
 means thereof for him the Son of God purposely came down, and suffered
 death; that an act of oblivion is past, and a full remission of sins exhibited to
 Rom. 8. 1. 5. 1. *him*, if he will embrace it; that now *there is no condemnation to them that are*
 Col. 1. 5. *in Christ Jesus*; and that, *being justified by faith we have peace with God*; that
 blessing is his portion, and that an eternal heritage of joy is reserved for him,
 what ease must he find in his conscience, what comfort must possess his heart?
 Isa. 26. 3. how effectually will that of the Prophet be accomplished in him, *Thou wilt*
keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee, because he trusteth in
thee?

Again, it is Faith, which breedeth the *courage*, and upholdeth the *patience* requisite to support us in our spiritual course.

It doth inspire *courage*, prompting to attempt the bravest enterprises, dispo-
 sing to prosecute them resolutely, and enabling happily to atchieve them: For he
 that believeth himself in his undertakings backed by omnipotence, and that, as
 Phil. 4. 13. St. *Paul*, *he can do all things through Christ strengthening him*, what should he fear
 to set upon, what difficulty should keep him off, what hazard should dismay
 (Phil. 1. 28. him? he that knoweth himself, by reason of the succour attending him, infinite-
 1 John 4. 4.) ly to overmatch all opposition, whom should he not dare to encounter? may he
 Psalm 27. 1. not well say with *David*; *The Lord is my light, and my salvation, whom shall I*
 118. 6. *fear; the Lord is the strength of my life, of whom shall I be afraid?* Let all the
 Chrys. Tom. world, let earth and hell combine to invade him, how can that mate his Spirit,
 7. p. 51. if he believe they cannot overthrow him, or hurt him, being secured by the in-
 Psalm 46. 1, 2. vincible protection of him, to whose will all things do bow; in comparison to
 whom nothing is puissant, beside whom nothing is really formidable; seeing
 Matt. 10. 28. none but *He can kill*, none can touch the soul?
 1 Thel. 5. 8. If we be armed with the spiritual panoply, having our head covered with
 Eph. 6. 15. *the helmet of salvation*, our heart guarded with *the breast-plate of righteousness*,
 Rom. 13. 12. our loyns girt about with *truth*, our feet shod with *the preparation of the Gospel*
 2 Cor. 6. 7. *of peace*, all our body sheltred by the impenetrable shield of *Faith*; and wield-
 Heb. 4. 12. ing in our hands by faith the *penetrant two edged sword of the Spirit*; which is
the word of God; what assaults may we not sustain, what foes shall we not
 easily repel?

The most redoubtable enemy we have is our own *flesh*, which with a migh-
 Gal. 5. 17. ty force of violent appetites and impetuous passions is ever struggling with our
 Rom. 7. 23. reason, and warring against our soul; yet it Faith alone dareth to resist, and is
 1 Pet. 2. 11. able to quell, opposing to the present delights of sense the hopes of future joy,
 quashing transitory satisfactions by the fears of endless torment.

The *world* is another powerful enemy; ever striving by its corrupt princi-
 ples, by its bad examples, by its naughty fashions, by its menaces of persecu-
 tion, damage and disgrace, by its promises of vain honour, base profit, and foul
 pleasure to overthrow and undo us; but a resolute Faith will defeat its at-
 tempts; for *He* (saith St. *John*) *that is born of God, overcometh the world, and*
 1 John 5. 5. *this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith*; the faith of a bet-
 (2 Pet. 1. 4. ter world will defend us from the frowns, and the flatteries of this; the riches,
 Eph. 4. 22.) glories and joys of heaven thereby presented to our minds will secure us from
 being enchanted with the wealth, splendours and pleasures of earth.

1 Pet. 5. 8. Another fierce adversary is the cursed *Fiend*; who ever like a roaring lion go-
 eth about seeking to devour us, or like a treacherous snake lieth in wait to bite
 us; raising panick fears to daunt and affright us; laying subtle trains of temp-
 tation, to abuse and seduce us; but him by resistance we may easily put to
 flight, For resist the *Devil*, saith St. *James*, *and he will flee from you*; and how
 James 4. 7. we must resist him, St. *Peter* telleth us, *Whom resist steadfast in faith*; and St.
 Eph. 4. 27. *Paul* also, *Above all* (saith he) *taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be*
 Eph. 6. 16. *able to quench the fiery darts of the wicked one*; if we hold forth this glittering
 shield, it will dazle his sight, and damp his courage; being not able to endure
 its lustre, or stand its opposition he will instantly retire; fearing that by our
 victory

victory over his temptations (through reliance on God's help, and adherence to his truth) our reward shall be heightened, and his torment (the torment of prosperous envy and banished malice) be encreased.

Faith also will arm us with *patience* to endure whatever events shall be dispensed, with alacrity and comfort; lightning the most heavy burthens imposed on us, sweetning the most distasteful occurrences incident to us: for

He, who is persuaded that by any damage here sustained for conscience toward God, he shall become a huge gainer, *receiving*, as the Gospel promiseth, *an hundred fold, and inheriting eternal life*, what will he not gladly lose? will he not willingly put forth all he hath in this most profitable usury? will he not, as those Hebrews did, *take joyfully the spoiling of his goods, knowing that he hath in heaven a better and an enduring substance?* Matt. 19. 29.
Luke 18. 30.
Phil. 3. 8.
Heb. 10. 34.

He, who believeth, that in regard to any disgrace cast on him for his virtue, he shall be honoured by God, and crowned with heavenly glory, will he not in a manner be proud and ambitious of such disgrace; will he not, as the Apostles did, *rejoice that he is counted worthy to suffer shame for the name of Christ?* Matt. 5. 12.
Acts 5. 41.
1 Pet. 4. 14.

He, who trusteth, that for a little pains taken in God's service, he shall receive *abundant wages*, far exceeding the merit of his labour, will he not cheerfully bear any toil or drudgery therein? Matt. 5. 12.
Luke 6. 35.
1 Cor. 3. 8.

He who, with St. Paul, *computeth, that the light afflictions, which are but for a moment, are not worthy to be compared with the glories that shall be revealed; and that those light momentary afflictions do work for us a far more exceeding weight of glory*; will they not indeed be light unto him; will he not feel them lying on him, as a few straws or feathers?

He, who conceiveth our Lord's word true, that *by losing his life he shall find it*, or that death shall become to him a door into a happy immortality, would he not gladly upon such terms be *killed all the day long, and be always delivered unto death for Jesus?* Matt. 10. 39.
16. 25.
Luke 17. 33.
(cf. 12. 5).
2 Tim. 2. 12.
1 Pet. 4. 13.

Rom. 8. 17. 2 Cor. 4. 10. Phil. 1. 29. Rom. 8. 36. 2 Cor. 4. 11. 1 Cor. 4. 9. Acts 20. 24. 21. 13.

He who by faith is assured, that any disasters befalling him, are not inflictions of wrath; but expressions of love toward him, by God in kindness dispensed as trials of his faith, as exercises of his virtue, as occasions of his acquiring more plentiful rewards, how can he be disgusted at them, or discomposed by them? why should he not rather accept them as favours, as felicities, with a thankful and joyful heart; *counting it*, as St. James adviseth, *all joy, when he falleth into divers temptations?* Jam. 1. 3.
1 Pet. 1. 5.
Rom. 5. 3.
Matt. 5. 12.
Jam. 1. 2.
Rom. 5. 3.
Luke 6. 23.

In fine, it is Faith alone, which can plant in us that which is the root of all contentedness and all patience; a just indifference and unconcernedness about all things here: it alone can untack our minds and affections from this world, rearing our Souls from earth, and fixing them in heaven; for if we are persuaded, there is a state of life infinitely more desirable than the best condition here; if we believe there are things attainable by us, incomparably better than any which this world affordeth; in respect to which all these glories are but smoke, all these riches are but dirt, all these delights are but dreams, all these businesses are but triflings, all these substances are but shadows; how in our minds can we prize, how in our affections can we cleave unto these things? how then can we find in our hearts to spend upon them more care or pain than is needful? Omnia imaginaria in seculo, & nihil veri. Tert. de Cor. c. 13.

He that taketh himself here to be out of his element, that he is but a *stranger, and sojourner upon earth*, that he hath here no abiding city, no country, no house, no land, no treasure, no considerable interest; but that he is merely wayfaring, in passage toward his true home, and heavenly country, the *Jerusalem above*, whereof he is a citizen, where his grand concerns do lie, where he hath reserv'd for him immovable possessions, and unvaluable treasures; where he is designed to enjoy most noble privileges, and most illustrious dignities in the Court of the great King; how can he have his heart here sticking in this earthy clay, entangled with the petty cares, amused with the sorry entertainments of this life? how can he otherwise than with St. Paul be dead, and *crucified to this world*? how can he withhold his mind from soaring thither in contemplation, and in affection dwelling there, whither his desires and hopes do all tend, where his joy and felicity are found, where the great objects of his esteem and love do reside? Ἡ πατρίς ἡ ἐν οὐρανοῖς, καὶ ἡ πόλις ἡ ἀληθινή, ἣν ἐκζητοῦμεν τὴν ἐν οὐρανοῖς. Chrys. in Heb. 11. 13.
Gal. 6. 14.
2. 20.
ἐκείνη μετὰ τὴν ἐλπίδα καὶ τὴν πίστιν. Chrys. Tom. 5. Or. 55.

But

But you will perhaps interpose, and say, these are indeed fine sayings, but where do such effects appear? who I pray doth practise according to these notions? where is that gallant to be found, who doth work so great exploits? where may we discern that height of piety, that tenderness of charity, that meek comportment with injuries and affronts, that clear sincerity, that depth of humility, that strictness of temperance, that perfect contentedness, and undisturbed calmness of mind, that stoutness of courage, and stiffness of patience, which you talk of as the undoubted issues of faith? who is the man that with such glee doth hug afflictions, or biddeth adversity so welcome to his home? where dwell they, who so little regard this world, or so much affect the other? do we not see men run as if they were wild after preferment, wealth and pleasure? what do they else, but scrape, and scramble, and scuffle for these things? doth not every man moan the scantness of his lot, doth not every man flinch at any trouble, doth not every one with all his might strive to rid himself of any thing disgusting to his sense or fancy? are not therefore such *encomiums* of Faith mere speculations, or brave *Rhodomontades* of Divinity?

The Objection I confess is a shrewd one, but I must reply to it: You say, where are such effects, where are such men? I ask then, where is Faith, where are Believers? shew me the one, and I will shew you the other: If such effects do not appear, 'tis no argument that Faith cannot produce them, but a sign, that Faith is wanting; as if a tree doth not put forth in due season, we conclude the root is dead; if a fountain yield no streams, we suppose it dried up: *Shew me* (saith St. James) *thy faith by thy works*; implying, that if good works do not shine forth in the conversation, 'tis suspicious there is no true faith in the heart: for such faith is not a feeble weening, or a notion swimming in the head, 'tis not a profession issuing from the mouth, 'tis not following such a garb, or adhering to such a party, but a persuasion fixed in the heart by good reason, by firm resolution, by lively sense; it is *with the heart*, as St. Paul saith, *man believeth unto righteousness*; that is the Faith we speak of, and to which we ascribe the production of so great and worthy effects: if a man wanteth that, attested by practice sutable, though he know all the points exactly, though he readily will say *Amen* to every Article of the Creed, though he wear all the badges of a Christian, though he frequent the Congregations, and comply with the Forms of our Religion, yet is he really an Infidel: for is he not an Infidel, who denieth God? and is he not such a *Renegado*, who liveth impiously? he is so in St. Paul's account; for *they profess* (saith he of such persons) *that they know God, but in works they deny him*; and *He is not a Jew*, saith the same Apostle (he is not a Christian, may we by parity of reason affirm) *who is one outwardly; but he is a Christian, who is one inwardly, and faith is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter, whose praise is not of men, but of God*: we may attribute to a barren conceit, or to a formal profession, the name of Faith; but it is in an equivocal or wide sense, as a dead man is called a man, or a dry stick resting in the earth, a tree; for so Faith (saith St. James) *without works is dead*; is indeed but a trunk, or carcase of faith, resembling it in outward shape, but void of its spirit and life.

To our infidelity therefore, that overspreading vice, to the unsincerity, or deadness of our faith, the great defects of our practice are to be imputed; that is the grand source, from which impiety doth so o'erflow: that so few instances of sprightly vertue are visible, may be a sign the time is the same, or very like to that, of which our Lord saith, *When the son of man cometh, shall he indeed find Faith upon the Earth?*

But if such effects can now rarely be found, yet time hath been, when they were more rife, scarce any time hath been quite destitute of them; every Age since the foundation of things may have tokens and trophies to shew of faith's victorious efficacy; so many actions as there have been truly great and glorious, so many gallant feats have been achieved by Faith: If we survey the lives of the antient *Patriarchs*, of the *Prophets*, of the *Apostles*, of the *Martyrs* and *Confessors* of true Religion, their faith in all their works is most conspicuous.

Faith recommended that *excellent sacrifice of Abel* to divine acceptance, and advanced him to the rank of first *Martyr* for piety.

On the wings of faith did *Enoch* mount to heaven, snatching the reward due to his faithful, and therefore *well-pleasing* obedience.

Faith preserved *Noah* from two mighty deluges, one of sin, the other of water, overflowing the earth; by it he stemmed the torrent of the one, and rode on the back of the other; it encouraged him to be a *preacher of righteousness* 2 Pet. 2. 1. against the grain, and a practiser of it against the fashion of the world; not regarding the common hatred and envy which he did incur thereby; it moved him to undertake that great and strange work of building the Ark, for a sanctuary and seminary of mankind; the type of that spiritual vessel, by embarking into which through Faith we are saved from utter ruin. Gen. 7. 1.

Faith disposed *Abraham* to forsake his country and home, his estate, his kindred, following divine conduct *he knew not whither*; to wander abroad and to journey among barbarous strangers: Faith inclined him at God's command, to sacrifice his only Son, a goodly youth, in the flower of his age and hopes, worthily most dear unto him; the Son of his old age, and the comfort thereof, given to him by miracle, and in special favour; the prop of his Family, and the heir of promise, by whom his seed was to be propagated, and his memory to flourish; him was he ready in obedience with his own hand to slay, quelling nature and his bowels, thwarting his own hopes, defying all semblances of contradiction or clashing between the commands and promises of God. Heb. 11. 8. Chrys. Tom. 7. p. 17.

Faith, through the rudest efforts of envy and malice, through the dismal calamities of exile and slavery, through hideous snares of temptation, through villainous slanders, through loathsome prisons and fetters of iron, all along sustained with admirable moderation and presence of mind, did rear up *Joseph* to the helm of that great Kingdom.

The same inclined *Moses* to exchange the dignities and delights of a Court for a state of vagrancy and servility; it heartned him to outbrave the invincible obstinacy of a mighty Prince; it steeled him with patience to conduct, for the space of forty years, through a wild desert, a most perverse and mutinous herd of people.

Faith was mother of that renowned patience, which exhausted *Satan's* quiver, spent all his artillery, and wore out his invention in suggesting mischiefs; *I know that my Redeemer liveth*, was the rock, on which that unshakable patience of *Job* was founded. Chrys. Ibid. Job 19. 25.

That pricked the ruddy Stripling forward, naked and unarmed, with undaunted heart and countenance, to invade the Monster of *Gath*, that tower of flesh, swelling with rage and pride, and all fenced with brass and steel; *Thou comest to me, said he, with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield; but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts*; there lay his confidence, thence sprung his admirable courage. 1 Sam. 17. 45.

To this the bold attempts, and the glorious victories of *Joshua*, of *Gideon*, of *Barak*, of *Jephtha*, of *Sampson*, of *Jonathan*, of the *Maccabees*, are worthily ascribed, who with small forces, upon great disadvantages, did assault, did vanquish mighty Enemies, and Oppressors.

This enflamed the zeal of *Elias*, by which he alone did check and control the degenerate follies of his Nation, surmounting the indignation of Princes which favoured them; it fed him in the Wilderness by the purveyance of Ravens; it framed the wheels of that fiery Chariot, which transported him into heaven. 1 Kings 18. 36. 19. 20. 2 Kings 2. 11.

This made *Jeremy*, with like zeal and courage, dare to carry most unwelcome news and unpleasant messages to an outrageous people, not daunted by their angry menaces, or cruel misusages; *his feet sunk into the mire*, but faith bore up his heart above all discouragement. Jer. 38. 4, 6.

This saved the conscience of those three brave Youths clear from that impiety, into which barbarous violence would have driven them; so that neither the fury of that Monarch, nor his gaping furnace, could terrify them into sin; faith putting into their mouths those manful words, *O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter; If it be so, our God whom we serve, is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace; and he will deliver us out of thy hand, O King; but if not, be it known unto thee, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden Image, which thou hast set up*; their faith carried them undaunted into the flames, and kept them untoucht within them; so that they became as gold, not wasted, but tried and purified in the furnace. Dan. 3. 19. 16, 18, 27.

Neither could a danger no less terrible scare the noble *Daniel* from his devotions; his faith did *stop the Lions mouths*; and *He* (saith the Text) *was taken up out of the den, and no manner of hurt was found upon him, because he trusted in his God.*

Such exploits of spiritual prowess were atchieved by an *Old-Testament-Faith*, relying upon God's attributes and providence, although wanting a clear revelation of the promises, which then lay wrapped up in mysteries and shadows; but more heroical acts of fortitude and patience did the bright sunshine of grace and glory upon the minds of our Apostles and primitive Saints produce; animated by faith, a little troop of them marched out with resolution to attack all the Powers of hell, and to beat down the Kingdom of darkness, to dispatch all the prejudices and errors of mankind, and to subdue the world to the obedience of Christ; so armed, successfully did they knock down and trample upon all opposition to their glorious designs; they defeated all the secular power and policy, they baffled all the wit, the learning, the eloquence, which stood in their way, or gave them resistance; they triumphed over persecutions, and in regard to all sufferings *were more than conquerors*; to forsake and forfeit all they had, was their gain; to *have nothing* was their wealth, to incur disgraces was their glory; to be in continual labour and travel was their ease; fastings, hunger and thirst were their pleasure, their feast, their luxury; prisons were chapels to them, in which they preached, and prayed, and sang praises to God; their joy was to suffer, to receive stripes, and undergo torments was their triumph and their glory; they constantly defied, they often courted death.

That they were able to perform such prodigious acts, and to endure things so insupportable, was not from a stupid insensibility of things, from a sturdiness of spirit, or stiffness of humour; but from a true magnanimity inspired by faith: Because they were persuaded of God's will, because they confided in God's help, because they relied on God's word; because they did expect rewards from God able to satisfy for all their pains and losses; this made them to undertake so bold enterprizes, and carried them with insuperable constancy through all; hence were they glad to abandon their ease and pleasure, to prostitute their honour and reputation, to part with their substance, to venture their safety, to sacrifice their lives for God's truth; *Therefore do we both labour, and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the saviour of all men, specially of those that believe,* is the short account which *St. Paul* rendreth of it: And infallibly the like effects will Faith produce, wherever it is found, in a degree proportionable to its sincerity and strength.

A grain of Faith (our Saviour faith) *is able to remove mountains*; that is, to accomplish things in appearance very strange and difficult; and, *To him that believeth all things are possible*; faith the same mouth of truth; and *He* (saith our Lord again) *that believeth in me, the works that I do, he also shall do, and greater works than those shall he do.* If this be true in reference to works concerning the frame of nature, it is surely no less true in regard to those which lie within the more proper sphere of Faith, to moral and spiritual operations: If Faith can obtain the help of God, enabling to transfer a mountain, it also can procure his grace disposing to restrain an appetite, or repress a passion.

Now that which is it in self so worthy and lovely, which is attended with so good comforts, which is the daughter of so excellent causes, the sister of so great virtues, the parent of so admirable effects; how can it otherwise than be very precious, very laudable, very acceptable? how can we at all wonder that it should be graced with such commendations, and crowned with such rewards?

Let us therefore (to conclude) be exhorted, if we do want it, to endeavour the acquit of it by all proper means (by serious contemplation and study, by prayer to God, by voiding all obstructions of it): if we have it, to hold it fast; to cherish it, to improve it, as by all good ways, so especially by good practice; that we may produce the good fruits, and obtain the happy rewards thereof; through the mercies of God in Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom for ever be all praise.

Now the God of all hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the holy Ghost. Amen.

I Believe, &c.

SERMON IV.

OF JUSTIFYING FAITH.

ROM. 5. 1.

Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Therefore; that word implies the text to be a conclusion (by way of inference, or of recapitulation) resulting from the precedent discourse; it is indeed the principal conclusion, which (as being supposed a peculiar and a grand part of the Christian doctrine, and deserving therefore a strong proof and clear vindication) St. Paul designed by several arguments to make good. Upon the words, being of such importance, I should so treat; as first to explain them, or to settle their true sense; then to make some practical application of the truths they contain.

As to the explicatory part, I should consider first, what the faith is, by which we are said to be justified; 2. what being justified doth import; 3. how by such faith we are so justified; 4. what the peace with God is, here adjoined to justification; 5. what relation the whole matter bears to our Lord Jesus Christ; or how through him being justified, we have peace with God; in the prosecution of which particulars it would appear, who the persons justified are, and who justifies us; with other circumstances incident.

I shall at this time only insist upon the first particular, concerning the notion of Faith proper to this place, in order to the resolution of which inquiry, I shall lay down some useful observations: and,

1. First, I observe, that *Faith*, or belief, in the vulgar acception, doth signify (as we have it briefly described in Aristotle's Topicks) a *σφοδρὴ γνώμη*, an earnest opinion or persuasion of mind concerning the truth of some matter propounded. Such an opinion being produced by, or grounded upon some forcible reason (either immediate evidence of the matter, or sense and experience, or some strong argument of reason, or some credible testimony; for whatever we assent

Aut proba esse quæ credis; aut si n n probas, quomodo credis. Tertul. adv. Marc. V. 1.

"Ὅταν γὰρ πῶς, πιστεύῃ, καὶ γινώσκῃ
αὐτὸ ὅσιν αἱ ἀρχαὶ, ἐπίσταται. Arist.
Eth. 6. 3.

Ἀειστέλης τὸ ἐπόμενον τῇ ἐπιστήμῃ
κεῖμα ὡς ἀληθές, τὸ ἐπὶ τῇ πίστει ἢ
φροσίν. Clem. Strom. 2. p. 287.

Ἐγὼ γὰρ πιστεύω ἐπὶ ὅσιν οἱ δο-
ξάζουσιν, ἢ ἐπὶ τοῖς ἐπίσταται. Arist.
7. 3. (Eth.)

unto, and judge true upon any such grounds and induce-
ments, we are commonly said to believe) this is the popu-
lar acception of the word; and according thereto I con-
ceive it usually signifies in holy Scripture; which being not
penn'd by Masters of humane art or science; nor directed
to persons of more than ordinary capacities or improve-
ments, doth not intend to use words otherwise than in the
most plain and ordinary manner.

Belief therefore in general, I suppose, denotes a firm persuasion of mind con-
cerning the truth of what is propounded; whether it be some one single pro-
position (as when *Abraham* believed, that *God was able to perform what he*
had promised; and *Sarah*, that *God, who had promised was faithful*) or some sy-
steme of propositions, as when we are said to *believe God's word* (that is all,
78. 32: which by his Prophets was in his name declared) to *believe the truth* (that is
2 Thes. 2. 12. all the propositions taught in the true religion as so) to *believe God's command-*
ments (that is the doctrines in God's Law to be true, and the precepts thereof to
Psalms 119. 66. be good) to *believe the Gospel* (that is to be persuaded of the truth of all the pro-
Mark 1. 15. positions asserted, or declared in the Gospel.)
Phil. 1. 27.

2. I observe *Secondly*, that whereas frequently some person, or single thing
is represented (*verbo tenus*) as the object of faith, this doth not prejudice, or
in effect alter the notion I mentioned; for it is only a figurative manner of
speaking, whereby is always meant the being persuaded concerning the truth
of some proposition (or propositions) relating to that person or thing: for o-
therwise it is unintelligible how any incomplex thing (as they speak) can be
the complete, or immediate object of belief: beside simple apprehension (or fra-
ming the bare *Idea* of a thing) there is no operation of a man's mind terminated
upon one single object; and belief of a thing surely implies more than a simple
apprehension thereof: what it is, for instance, to believe this, or that proposi-
tion about a man, or a tree (that a man is such a kind of thing, that a tree
hath this, or that property) is very easie to conceive; but the phrase believing
a man, or a tree (taken properly, or excluding figures) is altogether insignifi-
cant, and unintelligible: indeed to believe (*πιστεύειν*) is the effect τῷ πεπεισμένῳ (of
a persuasive argument,) and the result of ratiocination; whence in Scripture it is
commended, or discommended, as implying a good or bad use of reason. The
proper object of Faith is therefore some proposition deduced from others by dis-
course; as it is said, that *many of the Samaritans believed in Christ, because of*
John 4. 39. *the woman's word, who testified that He told her all that ever she did*; or as St.
John 20. 29. *Thomas believed, because he saw*; or as when it is said, that *many believed on*
John 2. 23. *our Lord's name, beholding the miracles which he did*; when then, for example,
Exod. 14. 31. the *Jews* are required to believe *Moses* (or to believe in *Moses*, after the He-
brew manner of speaking) it is meant, to be persuaded of the truth of what he
19. 9. delivered, as proceeding from divine revelation; or to believe him to be what he
Joh. 5. 45, &c. professed himself, a messenger or prophet of God. So to *believe the Prophets* or
2 Chr. 20. 20. in the Prophets, (נביאִים) was to be persuaded concerning the truth of what they
uttered in God's name (that the doctrines were true, the commands were to
be obeyed, the threats and promises should be performed, the predictions should
be accomplished: to believe all which the Prophets did say, as our *Saviour* speaks,
Luke 24. 25. to believe all things written in the Prophets, as St. *Paul*.) So to believe God's
Acts 24. 14. works (a phrase we have in the *Psalms*) signifies, to be persuaded, that those
Psalms 78. 32. works did proceed from God, or were the effects of his good providence: to
Jer. 17. 5. believe in man (that which is so often prohibited, and dissuaded) denotes the
46. 25. being persuaded, that man in our need is able to relieve and succour us; lastly
Psalms 118. 8. to believe in God (a duty so often enjoined, and inculcated) is to be persuaded,
&c. that God is true in whatever he says, faithful in performance of what he pro-
mises; perfectly wise, powerful and good; able and willing to do us good;
the being persuaded, I say, of all these propositions, or such of them as sute the
present circumstances and occasion, is to believe in God: thus, in fine, to be-
lieve on a person, or thing, is only a short expression (figuratively) denoting
the being persuaded of the truth of some proposition relating, in one way or
other, to that person or thing (which way is commonly discernible by confi-
dering

dering the nature, or state of such a person, or such a thing) the use of which Observation may afterward appear.

3. I observe *Thirdly*, that (as it is ordinary in like cases concerning the use of words) the word *belief* is by a kind of *synecdoche*, (or *metonymie* if you please) so commonly extended in signification, as together with such a persuasion as we spoke of to imply whatever by a kind of necessity (natural, or moral) doth result from it; so comprehending those acts of will, those affections of soul, and those deeds, which may be presumed consequent upon such a persuasion: for instance, when God commanded *Abraham* to forsake his country, promising him a happy establishment in the land of *Canaan*, with a perpetual blessing upon his posterity; *Abraham* was persuaded concerning the power, and fidelity of God; and concerning the truth of what was promised and foretold; in that persuasion his faith, according to the first, proper and restrained sense, did consist: but because from such a persuasion (being sincere, and strong enough) there did naturally, and duly result a satisfaction, or acquiescence in the matter enjoined as best to be done; a choice, and resolution to comply with God's appointment; an effectual obedience; a cheerful expectation of a good issue thereupon; therefore all those dispositions of soul, and actions concurring become expressed by the name of faith (that first persuasion being the Principle, and root of them;) for it is for his faith that he is highly commended; it is for it that he obtained so favourable an approbation and acceptance from God: Yet supposing *Abraham* to have had such a persuasion concerning God; and yet to have disliked what God required, or to have resolved against doing it, or to have indeed disobeyed, or to have disregarded the happy success; it is plain that *Abraham* as to the whole matter deserved rather much blame, than any commendation; and would not upon that account have had *righteousness imputed to him*, and have been called *the friend of God*: when therefore his faith is so magnified, that word comprehends not his bare persuasion only, but all those concomitants thereof, which if they had not gone along therewith, it had been a proof, that such a persuasion was not sincere (not ἀνυπόκριτος πίστις, *an undissembled faith*; such as St. Paul commends in *Timothy*) or not strong enough (not ἀδιδάκτος πίστις, *an undoubting faith*) but a weak, a small, a dead, an ineffectual faith; which come under blame, and reproof; but the effect shewed, that he did not (as St. Paul says) ἀδυνάμει τῇ πίστει, had not a weak, or sickly faith; nor staggered at the promise of God; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; which he did not only in believing his word, but in suiting his affections, and yielding obedience thereto: (πίστις ὑπακούσεν ἐξαλείψαι) *by faith he obeyed, so as to forsake his country*, says the Apostle to the *Hebrews*; And Faith thus taken is not only a single act of a man's understanding, or will, but a complex of many dispositions and actions, diffused through divers faculties of a man, denoting the whole complication of good dispositions, and actions relating to one matter; which attend upon a true and earnest persuasion concerning it; right choice, submission and satisfaction of mind, firm resolution, dutiful obedience, constant and cheerful hope; or the like.

4. I observe more nearly to our purpose, *fourthly*, that the Faith here spoken of (being here, and otherwise put absolutely, or by it self, without any adjunct of limitation or distinction) is often set down with terms annexed thereto, explaining and determining it; being sometimes styled the faith of Christ, of Jesus, of God (τῷ Χριστῷ, τῷ Ἰησοῦ, τῷ Θεῷ) sometimes faith upon Christ (εἰς Χριστόν, and ἐπὶ Χριστόν) faith in Christ (ἐν Χριστῷ) faith to Christ, to the Lord, to God (πιστεύειν τῷ Χριστῷ, τῷ κυρίῳ, τῷ Θεῷ) faith upon the name of Christ (εἰς ὄνομα) faith of his name (πίστις τῷ ὀνόματι) faith to his name (τῷ ὀνόματι;) which phrases, all questionless denoting the same thing, do imply this faith to consist in being persuaded concerning the truth of some propositions chiefly relating to our Lord and Saviour *Jesus Christ*, either as grounded upon his Authority, or appertaining to his Person: Now what such propositions are we may learn from other expressions, descriptions, or circumlocutions declaring the nature and quality of this faith: it is sometimes called *the belief of the Gospel*, (that is of the whole systeme of doctrines, and laws, and pro-

Rom. 4. 20.

James 2. 23.

1 Tim. 1. 5.

2 Tim. 1. 5.

James 3. 17.

Rom. 4. 20.

Rom. 14. 1.

1 Cor. 8. 10.

Rom. 4. 19.

Matt. 6. 30.

8. 26. &c.

Jam. 2. 17, 20.

Gal. 5. 6.

Heb. 11. 8.

Rom. 3. 3, 21, 26. Gal. 2. 16, 20. 3. 22.
Phil. 3. 9. Apoc. 2. 13. 14. 12.
εἰς, Act. 20. 21, 24, 25. 26. 18. Col. 2. 5, &c.
ἐπὶ, Heb. 6. 1. Act. 9. 42. 22. 19, &c.
ἐν, Gal. 3. 26. 1 Tim. 3. 13. 2 Tim. 3.
15. Act. 13. 39, &c.
τῷ Χρ. Act. 5. 14. 16. 34. 18. 8. 27. 25.
John 5. 24. 10. 37, 38. 14. 11, &c.
εἰς ὄνομα, John 1. 12. 2. 23. 1 John 5.
13, &c. Act. 3. 16. τῷ.
1 John 3. 23. τῷ.

Mark 1. 15.

Phil. 1. 27.

1 Pet. 4. 17.

2 Thes. 2. 12.

* 1 Tim. 4. 3. mises, and prophecies taught, delivered, or declared by Christ, and his Apostles, Repent, said St. John the Baptist, and believe the Gospel) the belief of the truth, (that body of truth, signally so called, which was taught by the same Authors) the acknowledgment of the same truth (* πισὸς. & ἐπεγνωκὸς τὴν ἀλήθειαν).
 a John 5. 47. *Deiav* are in St. Paul the same) equivalent to those descriptions of this faith
 b John 12. 47. are those expressions, which set it out by yielding assent (generally) to what
 c John 12. 48. our Lord Christ, and his Apostles taught, or to some chief points of their doctrine.
 Acts 11. 1. *Et*ne, inferring the rest; the ^abelieving, ^bhearing, ^creceiving the word of God,
 d John 3. 33. of Christ, of the Apostles, ^dthe receiving Christ's testimony, and (which is the
 e John 1. 12. same) ^ereceiving Christ himself; ^fcoming unto Christ, (that is as disciples to their
 f John 6. 37. Master, as servants to their Lord, as persons oppressed and enslaved to their Deliverer)
 44. 65. 5. 20. ^gThe believing (and knowing) that Jesus was sent by God, and came
 Matt. 11. 28. from him; ^hThe believing, that Jesus was, what he professed himself to be;
 g John 17. 8. ⁱthe confessing, that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh; that Jesus is the Christ, the
 5. 24. 6. 29. Son of God, He which should come into the world; the King of Israel; that God
 11. 42. John raised him from the dead; by the belief of which one point, as involving the
 16. 30. 17. 21. rest, St. Paul expresseth this faith: ^kIf thou (saith he) shalt confess with thy
 i 1 John 4. 2, mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe with thy heart, that God raised him from
 15. the dead, thou shalt be saved.
 1 John 5. 1, 5. *the dead, thou shalt be saved.*
 John 4. 42.
 John 1. 50.
 John 20. 31. Acts 8. 37. & Rom. 10. 9. *Ὁ ἀκούσας παρὰ πατέρους καὶ μαθὼν, John 6. 45.*

The result upon considering all which expressions declaratory of the nature of this Faith (for this surely is not different from that, which is so commonly elsewhere represented in our Saviour's, and his Apostles discourses and writings, as a great duty required of us; as a virtue (or act of virtue) highly commendable, as an especial instrument of our salvation, as a necessary condition prerequisite to our partaking the benefits, and privileges by divine favour conferred on Christians); the result I say is this, that by this Faith (as to the first, and primary sense thereof) is understood the being truly and firmly persuaded in our minds, that Jesus was what he professed himself to be, and what the Apostles testified him to be; the *Messias*, by God designed, foretold and promised to be sent into the world, to redeem, govern, instruct and save mankind; our Redeemer and Saviour, our Lord and Master, our King and Judge; the Great high Priest, and Prophet of God; the being assured of these, and all other propositions connexed with these; or in short, the being thoroughly persuaded of the truth of that Gospel; which was revealed and taught by Jesus and his Apostles. That this notion is true, those descriptions of this faith, and phrases expressing it, do sufficiently shew; the nature and reason of the thing doth confirm the same; for that such a faith is, in its kind and order, apt and sufficient to promote God's design of saving us, to render us capable of God's favour; to purge our hearts, and work that change of mind, which is necessary in order to the obtaining God's favour, and enjoying happiness; to produce that obedience, which God requires of us, and without which we cannot be saved; these things are the natural results of such a persuasion concerning those truths; as natural, as the desire and pursuit of any good doth arise from the clear apprehension thereof, or as the shunning of any mischief doth follow from the like apprehension; as a persuasion that wealth is to be got thereby, makes the merchant to undergo the dangers and pains of a long voyage; (verifying that, *Impiger extremos currit mercator ad Indos, Per mare pauperiem fugiens, per saxa, per ignes*) as the persuasion that health may thereby be recovered, engages a man not only to take down the most unfavoury potions, but to endure cuttings and burnings (*ut valeas ferrum patieris, & ignes*) as a persuasion, that refreshment is to be found in a place, doth effectually carry the hungry person thither: So a strong persuasion that Christian Religion is true, and the way of obtaining happiness, and of escaping misery, doth naturally produce a subjection of heart, and an obedience thereto; and accordingly we see the highest of those effects which the Gospel offers, or requires, are assigned to this faith, as results from it, or adjuncts thereof: Regeneration; *Who-soever*, saith St. John, *believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God*; Spiritual union with God! *Who-soever shall confess, that Jesus is the Son of God, God abideth*

1 John 5. 1.

1 John 1. 12.

1 John 4. 5.

abideth in him, and he in God: if what ye have heard from the beginning abide in John 2. 24. you, ye shall also abide in the Father and the Son. The obtaining God's love; John 16. 27. The father loves you, because you have loved me, and have believed, that I came 1st Thel. from God; Victory over the world: Who is he, that overcometh the world; 2. 13. Eph. 1. but he who believeth that Jesus is the Son of God? Freedom from spiritual slavery, 13. Acts 15. 7. and becoming true disciples of Christ; 1st John 5. 5. If ye abide in my word, ye are truly my John 8. 31, 32. disciples; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free. Obtaining everlasting life; He that heareth my word, and believeth him that sent me (that John 5. 24. is, who believeth my word, which is indeed the word of God, who sent me, and in whose name I speak) hath everlasting life. And, These things were John 20. 31. written, that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing it, you may have life in his name. Interest in God and Christ, He 2nd Ep. John 5. that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, He (ἐν τῷ) hath the Father and the Son. John 6. 47. Verily verily, I say unto you, he that believeth upon me, hath eternal life. Ri- 3. 36. 15. 16. sing with Christ (that is as to capacity and right:) Buried with him in Bap- Col. 2. 12. tism, wherein you are risen with him through faith of the operation of God; who raised him from the dead. Being saved; Whoever confesses with his mouth the Rom. 10. 9. Lord Jesus to be the Son of God; and in his heart believes that God raised him from the dead, shall be saved. Lastly being justified; for (St. Paul adjoins) a man believeth (in the manner before mentioned) to righteousness; and with Rom. 10. 10. the mouth confession is made to salvation. So we see, that the chief of those excellent benefits, to the procuring of which faith (however understood) is any-wise conducive, or requisite, do belong to the persuasion concerning Evangelical truths. We may also observe in the history concerning our Lord, and his Apostles proceedings toward persons, whom they had converted to Christianity, and did admit to a participation of the privileges thereof, that no other faith was by them required in order thereto; upon such a persuasion appearing they received them into the Church, baptized them, pronounced unto them an absolution from their sins, and a reception into God's favour: This was the faith of *Martha*, which gave her interest in the promise of eternal life: Every one (said our Saviour to her) living, and believing in me, shall never die: John 11. 26. dost thou believe this? she saith unto him: Yes Lord, I have believed, that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world: this was the faith, for which our Saviour commends St. Peter, and pronounces him hap- Matt. 16. 16; py: Upon appearance of this faith St. Peter baptized and admitted into the 17. Church the three thousand persons whom he had converted (Then, says the John 6. 69. Text, they who gladly (or willingly) received his word (that is, were per- Οἱ ἀκούσαντες ἀποδεξάμενοι τὸ λόγον. suaded of the truth of that doctrine, which is before set down concerning our Lord) were baptized; and the same day were added (to the Church) about Acts 2. 41. three thousand souls) Upon the like faith the Samaritans were baptized: (ὅταν Acts 8. 12. ἐπίστευσαν τῷ Φιλίππῳ, when they gave credence to Philip's doctrine:) and upon the same account did the same Evangelist say it was lawful to baptize the Eu- Acts 8. 37, 38. nuch, and accordingly did perform it: If, saith Philip, thou believest with thy whole heart, it is lawful (or thou mayst be baptized) He, answering said, I be- lieve that Jesus Christ is the Son of God; so he baptized him: This was the faith, upon which St. Paul baptized Lydia, when she had yielded assent unto Acts 16. 14, 15; (so προσέχειν doth import in the Acts; not only προσέχειν νῦν to yield attention, but προσέχειν πίσιν to give assent unto) the things spoken by St. Paul; thus al- so of those Jews in another place of the Acts, when St. Paul had opened, and Acts 17. 4. alledged, out of the Scriptures, that Christ was to suffer, and to rise again from the dead, and that Jesus was the Christ, it is said, πρὸς αὐτῷ ἐπεισῆσαν καὶ προσ- Acts 17. 3, 4; Acts 9. 20. 164 32. 17. 11, 12. ἐκλήρωσαν, were persuaded, and consorted with Paul, and Silas (that is, were received into Christian communion with them.) The same is intimated in o- ther passages of the Apostolical history; by all which it appears, that the Apo- stles method was to declare, and inculcate the main points of the Christian hi- story and doctrine, attesting to the one, and proving the other by testimonies and arguments proper to that purpose; and whoever of their hearers declared himself persuaded of the truth of what they taught, that he did heartily assent thereto, and resolved to profess and practise accordingly, him without more to do, they presently baptized, and instated him in the privileges appertaining to Christianity; or (in St. Paul's language) did justify them, according to their subordi-

subordinate manner, as the ministers of God. And thus did the Primitive Church, practise after the Apostles; as *Justin the Martyr* fully relates of it: —

ἔσοι ἀν πεισῶσι, καὶ πεισῶσιν ἀληθῆ πάντα τὰ ὑφ' ἡμῶν διδασκόμενα, καὶ λεγόμενα εἶναι, καὶ ποιῆν ὅπως διδάσκει ὑποσχάνθῃ, &c. — ἄγονται ὑφ' ἡμῶν ἐνδα ὕδατος ἐς, καὶ τεθρῆν ἀναγεννήσεως, ὃν καὶ ἡμεῖς αὐτοὶ ἀνεγεννήθημεν ἀναγεννῶνται — *Apol. 2. Whoever*

(said he) are persuaded, and do believe these things by us taught, and said to be true, and undertake that they can live so according to them; — are brought thither, where water is, and are regenerated after the same manner as we have been regenerated. I farther add, that even this faith is expressed to be the effect of divine grace, and inspiration; for, when *St. Peter* had confessed that

Matt. 16. 17. Jesus was the Christ, the Son of the living God, our Saviour tells him, *That flesh and blood had not revealed that unto him, but his Father in heaven; and, No man*

(St. Paul tells us) can call Jesus Lord, but by the holy Ghost; And, Every Spirit, which confesseth Jesus Christ to have been come in the flesh, is of God (saith

St. John). So that even, this is a faith, in respect to which the holy Ghost is called *the spirit of faith, which is the fruit of the spirit; and the gift of God; that which no man can have without God's drawing him; and teaching him;*

2 Cor. 4. 13. No man can come unto me except the Father that hath sent me shall draw him (ἐλκύσῃ αὐτόν.) *Every one that hath heard from the Father, and hath learn-*

ed, cometh unto me: to which it is ordinarily required, that God should open the heart, as he did Lydia's heart, to attend, and assent unto what Saint Paul

taught: Neither doth the Scripture (as I conceive) attribute any thing unto faith, which doth not agree to this notion.

We might lastly adjoin, that this was the common, and current notion of Faith among the ancient Christians; neither do we, I suppose, meet with any other in their Writings; all which things do abundantly confirm the truth thereof.

5. But I must farther observe particularly (in correspondence to what was before more generally observed,) that this Faith doth not only denote precisely,

and abstractedly such acts of mind, such opinions and persuasions concerning the truth of matters specified, but doth also connote, and imply (indeed comprehend according to the meaning of those, who use the word) such acts of will, as, supposing those persuasions to be real and complete, are naturally consequent upon them, and are in a manner necessarily coherent with them; a firm resolution

constantly to profess, and adhere unto the doctrine, of which a man is so persuaded; to obey all the laws and precepts, which it contains; forsaking in open profession, and in real practices all principles, rules, customs inconsistent with those doctrines and laws; that which is called *conversion, or returning to the Lord* (that is, leaving a course of rebellion, and disobedience to those laws, which the Lord in the Gospel commands, and resolvedly betaking them-

selves to the observance of them) *πολὺς τε ὄχλος πεισθεὶς ἐπέστρεψεν ἐπὶ τῷ Κυρίῳ, a great multitude (it is said) believing, did return unto the Lord; their faith*

did carry with it such a conversion. Hence this faith is stiled πειθαρχεῖν θεῷ (to obey God's command,) ὑπακούειν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ, to obey the Gospel; ὑπακούειν τῇ

πίσει, to obey the faith; ὑποταγὴν δὲ ὁμολογίας εἰς τὸ εὐαγγέλιον, (subjection of profess-

ing the gospel of Christ) with purpose of heart to adhere unto God; stipulation of a good conscience toward God (that which St. Peter intimates, as a necessary concomitant of baptism, it being a sincere undertaking, and engaging one's

self to obey God's commandments) in fine, to repent; which is either adequately the same thing with faith, or included therein, according to the Aposto-

lical meaning of the word; for that remission of sins, which is sometime made the consequent of faith, is elsewhere expressly annex'd to repentance: The summ

of the Gospel our Saviour himself expresses by the preaching in his Name repen-

tance, and remission of sins in all nations: and Repent, (St. Peter preached,) and let every one of you be baptized: And, Repent, (said he again) and return, that

your sins may be blotted out; and, Then to the Gentiles (say those in the Acts) hath God given repentance unto life; which signifies the same with that other

expression concerning the same persons, God's having purified their hearts by faith; in which places I take repentance to import the same thing with faith; being

Salv. de provid. IV. 1. Cum hoc sit dominis Christiani fides, fideliter Christi mandata servare, sit absq; dubio, ut nec fidem habeat qui infidelis est, nec Christum credat, qui Christi mandata conculcat, &c.

Acts 11. 21. Vid. Acts 9. 35. 14. 15. 26. 18.

Acts 5. 32. 1 Thes. 1. 8. Rom. 1. 6. 6. 17. 16. 16.

2 Cor. 9. 13. Acts 11. 23. 1 Pet. 3. 21.

Luke 24. 47. Acts 2. 38. Acts 3. 19. 17. 30.

Acts 11. 18.

Acts 15. 9.

being in effect nothing else, but sincere embracing Christian Religion. Now the word *faith* is thus extended (beyond its natural and primary force) to comprehend such a compliance of will, or purpose of obedience, because this doth naturally arise from a persuasion concerning the truth of the Gospel, if it be real and strong enough, in that degree, which Christianity requires, and supposes to the effects mentioned in the Gospel; if it be *ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ* in the heart (or a hearty faith) as St. Paul speaks; if it be such, as Philip exacts of the Eunuch, *ἀβελιέβ' ἔξ ὅλης τῆς καρδίας*, from the whole heart; if it have that due plerophory, stability, that solidity, which the Apostles speak of: for a weak, faint, slight, ill-grounded, ill-rooted opinion concerning the truth of the Gospel (such as those in another case had, whom our Saviour rebuked with a *τί δειλοί ἐστε, ὀλιγόπιστοι*; why are ye fearful, O ye small in faith? such as St. Peter had, when our Saviour said to him, *ὀλιγόπιστε τί ἐδίσσασας*; O thou of small faith, why didst thou doubt? which faith could not keep them nor him from sinking; not such as those had, who heard the word, and gladly received it; but wanted root, so that, when persecution or affliction did arise for the word, they were presently scandalized; not such a faith as those many Rulers had, who are said to have believed in Jesus, but for fear of the Pharisees did not confess him; not such as Simon Magus had, who is said to have believed Philip, but to no good effect, because his heart was not right before God; he having not thoroughly resolved to obey the Gospel; not such as Agrippa had, whom St. Paul had almost persuaded to be a Christian) these sorts of faith are in comparison to that we speak of, but equivocally so called; it includes a firm resolution to perform carefully all the duties enjoined to Christians, to undergo patiently all the crosses incident to Christianity; it is the same with becoming a disciple of Christ, which a man cannot be without renouncing all other interests and concerns, without denying one's self, forsaking all and following him; without taking his yoke upon him, going after, and bearing his cross: it supposes (as our Saviour also teaches us) that a man hath cast up with himself the gain, and loss he is like to receive by the bargain, and being satisfied therein, to contract *bonâ fide* with God; that a man hath weighed all the pains and dangers he shall be put upon by entering into this warfare, and so resolvedly to adventure upon it; it is productive of love to the truth, yea of love to God, and charity to men, without which all faith is unprofitable and ineffectual, as St. Paul teaches us. In short, this Faith is nothing else but a true, serious, resolute embracing Christianity; not only being persuaded that all the doctrines of Christ are true, but submitting to his will and command in all things.

Credere se in Christum quo modo dicit, qui non facit quod Christus facere præcepit? Cypr. de Un. Ec.

But to prevent mistakes, and remove objections, I shall yet further observe,

That this Faith hath, although not an adequate, yet a peculiar respect unto that part of Christian truth, which concerns the merciful intentions of God toward mankind, and the gracious performances of our Saviour in order to the accomplishing them; the promises of pardon to our sins, and restoral into God's favour upon the terms propounded in the Gospel, of sincere faith and repentance; whence the Gospel is called *ῥῆμα κατελλαγῆναι* (the word of reconciliation) and this is expressed as a summary of the Apostolick ministry or message; that God was in Christ reconciling the world, not imputing their sins; And, this our Saviour did order in especial manner to be preached in his name; this accordingly they did mainly propound and inculcate; that God had exalted Jesus to his right hand as a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance unto Israel, and remission of sins; that he should receive remission of sins; whoever did believe in his name; Let it be known unto you, brethren, that by this man remission of sins is *denounced unto you, (so did they preach.) Whence this faith is (signanter) called belief in the blood of Christ. Indeed of all Christian doctrines this is most proper first to be propounded and persuaded, as the most attractive to the belief of the rest; most encouraging and comfortable to men; most apt to procure glory to God by the illustration of his principal attributes, his justice and his goodness; most suitable to the state of things between God and man; for men being in a state of rebellion and enmity toward God, in order to their reducement and recovery thence it was most proper, that in the first place an overture of mercy and pardon should be made; an act of oblivion should be passed and propounded to them: Yet are not these propositions and promises the adequate or entire object of this faith; for other Articles

Acts 8. 37.
Rom. 10. 9.

ticles of faith are often propounded in a collateral order with those, yea sometimes (as in the case of the *Eunuch*) others are expressed, when that is not mentioned, but only understood: neither if any one should believe all the doctrines of that kind; if he did not withal believe that *Jesus* is his Lord, and shall be his Judge; that there shall be a Resurrection of the dead, and a judgment to come, with the like fundamental verities of our Religion, would he be a believer in this sense.

Fides dicit, parata sunt magna & incomprehensibilia dona a Deo fidelibus suis: dicit spes mihi illa bona servantur, charitas dicit curro ego ad illa. Bern.

7. I observe farther, that this Faith doth relate only to propositions revealed by God (or at least deduced from principles of reason, such as are, that there is a God; that God is good, veracious and faithful; that our religion is true in the gross; that the holy Scriptures were written by divine

inspiration; which propositions we believe upon rational grounds and motives) not unto other propositions concerning particular matter of fact, subject to private conscience or experience; nor to any conclusions depending upon such propositions. For instance, it is a part of this faith to believe that God is merciful and gracious, that he bears good will unto, and is disposed to pardon every penitent sinner; or (which is all one) that supposing a man doth believe, and hath repented, God doth actually love him, and doth forgive his sins: this is, I say, indeed a part of the faith we speak of, its object being part of the Gospel revealed unto us: but the being persuaded that God doth love me, or hath pardoned my sins, or that I am in a state of favour with God, may, as my circumstances may be, not be my duty; however it is no part of this faith, but a matter of opinion, dependent upon private experience: For such a persuasion must be grounded upon my being conscious to my self of having truly and thoroughly repented (this being required by God, as a necessary condition toward my obtaining pardon and his favour) of having performed which duty I may presume, when it is false (and therefore cannot then be obliged to believe it) and may doubt, when it is true, and that not without good reason; considering the blindness and fallibility of man's mind, and that man's heart is deceitful above all things, as the Prophet tells us: upon which account then a man may not be obliged to have such a persuasion. It is indeed a great fault to doubt, or distrust, on that hand which concerns God; about his goodness, his truth, his wisdom, or power; but it is not

Jer. 17. 9.

Qui perseveraverit usque ad finem, hic salvus erit; quicquid ante finem fuerit, gradus est, quo ad fastigium salutis ascenditur, non terminus, quo jam culminis summa teneatur, &c. Cypr. de Unit. Eccl. p. 259.

always (perhaps not commonly) blameable to question a man's own qualifications, or his own performances, whether in kind or degree they be answerable to what God requires; that is inconsistent with true faith, but this not: We cannot have any good religious affections toward God, if we do not take him to be our gracious father; but we may have in us

such affections toward him, and he may be favourably disposed toward us, when

Luke 15. 19.

Matt. 8. 8, 10.

we suspect our selves to be untoward children, *unworthy* (as the *prodigal Son* in the Gospel confessed himself) *to be called the sons of God*; the *Centurion* in the Gospel did confess himself *unworthy that Christ should enter under his roof*; but he declared his persuasion, that *if Christ should only speak a word, his child should be healed*; and our Saviour thereupon professes, *that he had not found so much faith in Israel*: to the *blind men* imploring his relief our Saviour puts the question, *Do ye believe that I can do this? they answered, Yes, Lord*: he required no more of them; but said thereupon, *according to your faith let it be done unto you*. And that

Matt. 9. 28.

Vid. Matt. 15.

27.

Rom. 4. 21, 22.

Heb. 11. 19.

ἡ ἀποστολή

ἰσχυρῶς

Rom. 4. 20.

for which *Abraham* the Father of believers his faith is represented so acceptable, is, his firm persuasion concerning God's power; *because* (saith St. *Paul*) *he had a plerophory, that what was promised, God was able to perform*; by doing thus, he was a believer, and thereby gave glory to God (as the *Apostle* there adds) if we do not then distrust God, we may have faith, although we distrust our selves. It is true (generally and absolutely speaking) we should endeavour so fully and clearly to repent, and to perform whatever God requires of us, that we may thence acquire a good hope concerning our state; we should labour, that *our hearts may not condemn us* of any presumptuous transgressing our duty, and consequently that we may become in a manner confident of God's favour towards us: but when we have done the best we can, even when we are not conscious of any enormous fault or defect, yet we may consider with St. *Paul*, *that we are not thereby justified*, but abide liable to the more certain cognisance and judgment of God, who

Col. 1. 23.

Heb. 3. 6.

1 John 3. 21.

1 Cor. 4. 4.

seeth

seeth not as a man seeth; that we are not capable, or competent judges of our selves; nor are ever the better for thinking well of our selves; since (as St. Paul tells us again) he is not approved that commends himself, but whom the Lord commendeth: for that, *delicta sua quis intelligit?* who can thoroughly understand and scann his own errors? who can say I have made my heart clean, I am purged of my sin? who can know (if the Psalmist impieth that he could not) until God hath searched him and discovers it, whether there be any secret way of wickedness in him; whether he be sufficiently grieved for having offended God, fully humbled under the sense of his sins, thoroughly resolved to amend his life? however it often happens that true faith and sincere repentance are in degree very defective; in which case we may, without prejudicing the truth of our faith, suspect the worst, yea I conceive it is more safe and commendable so to do: if in any, then chiefly, I suppose, in this most important and critical affair, the Wise-man's sentence doth hold, *Blessed is he that feareth always*; so feareth, as thereby to become more solicitous and watchful over his heart and ways; more careful and studious of securing his salvation finally; to render his calling and election in the event more firm, and in his apprehension more hopeful. I dare say of two persons otherwise alike qualified, he that upon this ground (fearing his own unworthiness, or the defect of his performances) is most doubtful of his state, doth stand really upon better terms with God; as the Pharisee, who justified himself, and took himself to be in a very good condition, was indeed less justified (some what the less for that conceit of his) than the poor Publican, who was sensible of his own unworthiness, and condemned himself in his own opinion: the great danger lies on that hand of being presumptuous, arrogant and self conceited, which God hates; and on this hand there usually lies humility, modesty and poverty of Spirit, which God loves. As every high thing (every elevation of mind) is abominable in God's sight; and he depresseth him that exalteth himself; so lowly thoughts are gracious in God's regard; he raiseth him that humbleth himself, and is lowly in his own eyes: he hath an especial respect to him, that is of a poor and contrite heart, and trembleth at his word. It is a property of good men (being such as often reflect upon their own hearts and ways, and thence discern the defects in them) with Jacob, to think themselves less than the least of God's mercies; with David to be afraid of God's judgments; it is their duty to pass the time of their sojourning here in fear, to work out their salvation with fear and trembling. I may add, that sometime a person much loving God, and much beloved of him, may be like a Pelican in the wilderness, and an Owl of the desert; from an apprehension of God's anger may have no soundness in his flesh, nor rest in his bones by reason of his sin; may have his spirit overwhelmed, and his heart within him desolate; may fear that his sins have separated between him and his God; and that he is forsaken of God; God hiding his face, and withdrawing his light of his countenance, he may be troubled; may have his soul cast down and disquieted within him; may be ready to say, I am cut off from before thine eyes; even such a man, in such a state of distress and doubt, may continue a believer; he retaining honourable thoughts of God (in which the worth and vertue of true faith consisteth) although dejected by the conscience of his own infirmities, by suspicion of his own indispositions, and consequently by the fear of God's displeasure.

Farther, that this Faith doth not essentially include a respect to such particular propositions, or does not (as many in these two latter ages have deemed and taught) consist in our being persuaded that our sins are pardon'd, or our persons just in God's esteem; that we are acceptable to God, and stand possessed of his favour, it appears from hence, that faith is in holy Scripture represented in nature precedaneous to God's benevolence (especial I mean, not general benevolence, for that prevents all acts and dispositions of us, or in us) to his conferring remission of sins, accepting and justifying our persons; it is a previous condition, without which (as the Apostle teaches us) it is impossible to please God; it is a reason of God's love (The Father, saith our Lord, loves you, because ye have loved me, and believed that I came from God) it is a ground of divine

H

accep-

Prov. 28. 14.

Nunquam est de salute propria mentis
secura sapientia. Salv. ad Eccl. Cath.
lib. 2.

2 Pet. 1. 10.

Quem censeas diuiniorem, nisi emendatorem;
quem emendatorem, nisi
timidiorem? Tertul. de Penit. 6.Luke 18. 14.
—10. 29.Luke 16. 15;
—18. 14.2 Sam. 22. 28.
Psal. 34. 18.Ez. 66. 2.
—57. 19.Gen. 32. 10;
Ps. 119. 120.Phil. 2. 12.
1 Pet. 1. 17;2 Pet. 1. 10.
Ps. 102. 6.

—38. 3.

—143. 4.
Jer. 5. 25.Matt. 27. 46.
Ps. 22. 1.Ps. 30. 7. 89;
46. 42. 5. 69;

16. 31. 22.

Sed fide hoc beneficium accipiemus
est, quod credere nos oportet, quod propter
Christum nobis donentur remissio
peccatorum & justificatio. Conf. Aug.
Quum justificamur fide, vult se intueri
filium Dei sedentem ad dextram Patris,
Mediatorem, interpellantem pro nobis,
& statuere, quod tibi remittantur
peccata; quod iustus, id est acceptus
reputeris. Melanct. Loc. com.
p. 418.

Heb. 11. 6.

John 16. 17.

James 2. 23. acceptation and good-will (*Abraham believed him, faith St. James, and it was accounted unto him for righteousness, and he was called the friend of God*) it is a mean, or instrument (so it is constantly represented) by which we are justified, obtain God's favour, and the remission of our sins; and therefore is in order of nature previous and prerequisite thereto; it is therefore required before baptism, in which remission of sins is consigned: God justifies, accepts and pardons him, that hath been impious, but not him that is an infidel: This is the method plainly declared in Scripture; wherefore if faith implies a persuasion that God hath remitted our sins, it must imply an antecedent faith (even a justifying faith, antecedent to it self,) or that we believe before we believe, and are justified before we are justified. I add, that by this notion many, or most (I will not after the Council of *Trent* say all) humble and modest Christians are excluded from being believers; even all those who are not confident of their own sincerity and sanctity, and consequently cannot be assured of their standing in God's favour: and on the other side, the most presumptuous and fanatical sort of people are most certainly the truest and strongest believers, as most partaking of the most essential property thereof, according to that notion; for of all men living such are wont to be most assured of God's special love unto them, and confident that their sins are pardoned; Experience sufficiently shews this to be true, and consequently that such a notion of Faith cannot be good.

Calv. Inst. Lib. 7. §. 7. & 28. compar. Nunc iusta fidei definitio nobis constabit, si dicamus esse divinam erga nos benevolentiam firmam, certamque cognitionem, &c.

Jam in divina benevolentia quam respicere dicitur fides, intelligimus salutis ac vite aeternae possessionem obtineri &c.

—firmus assensus—quo certa fiducia in Deo acquiescens firmiter unusquisque fidelis stuit, non solum promissum esse credentibus in genere remissionem peccatorum, sed sibi in particulari concessum, aeternamque justitiam, &c. ex ea vitam, &c.

Much less is that notion of faith right, which defines faith to be a firm and certain knowledge of God's eternal good-will toward us particularly, and that we shall be saved; which notion (taught in the beginning of the Reformation by a man of greatest name and authority) was thus lately expressed by the Professors of *Leyden* in their *Synopsis purioris Theologiae*: Faith (they say, in their definition thereof) is a firm assent — by which every believer with a certain trust resting in God, is persuaded not only that remission of sins is in general promised to them who believe, but is granted to himself particularly, and eternal righteousness, and from it life, by the mercy of God, &c. which notion seems to be very uncomfortable,

as rejecting every man from the company of believers, who is either ignorant or doubtful, not only concerning his present, but his final state; who hath not, not only a good opinion, but a certain knowledge of his present sincerity and sanctity; yea not only of this, but of his future constant perseverance therein; so that if a man be not sure he hath repented, he is (according to this notion) sure that he hath not repented, and is no believer: how many good people must this doctrine discourage and perplex? To remove it, we may consider, 1. that it altogether inverts and confounds the order of things declared in Scripture, wherein Faith (as we observed before) is set before obtaining God's good-will, as a prerequisite condition thereto; and is made a means of salvation (*without faith it is impossible to please God; By grace we are saved, through faith.*) And if we must believe before God loves us, (with such a love as we speak of) and before we can be saved; then must we know that we believe before we can know that God loves us, or that we shall be saved; and consequently we must indeed believe before we can know that God loves us, or that we shall be saved. But this doctrine makes the knowledge of God's love and of salvation in nature antecedent to faith, as being an essential ingredient into it; which is preposterous: Consider this circle of discourse: A man cannot know that he believes, without he does believe (this is certain) a man cannot know that he shall be saved, without knowing he doth believe (this is also certain, for upon what ground, from what evidence can he know his salvation, but by knowing his faith.) But again backward, A man (say they) cannot believe (and consequently not know that he believes) without being assured of his salvation: What an inextricable maze and confusion is here? this doctrine indeed doth make the knowledge of a future event to be the cause of its being future; it supposes God to become our friend (as *Abraham* was by his faith) by our knowing that he is our friend; it makes us to obtain a reward by knowing that we shall obtain it; it supposes the assurance of our coming to a journey's end to be the way of getting thither; which who can con-

Heb. 11. 6.
Eph. 2. 8.
Rom. 10. 9.

James 2. 23.

conceive intelligible, or true? Our *Saviour* doth indeed tell us, that it is *the way to life* everlasting (or conducive to the attaining it) to *know* (that is, to believe, as it is interpreted in the 8th verse of that chapter; for what upon good grounds we are persuaded of, or judge true, we may be said to know) *the true God, and Jesus Christ, whom he hath sent*; but he doth not say, it is life everlasting (or conducive to the obtaining it) to know, that we shall have life everlasting: that were somewhat strange to say. St. Peter exhorts us to *use diligence to make our calling and election sure* (or firm, and stable) but he doth not bid us know it to be sure; if we did know it to be so, what need should we have to make it so; yea how could we make it so? he doth not injoin us to be sure of it in our opinion, but to secure it in the event by sincere obedience, and a holy life; by so impressing this persuasion upon our minds, so rooting the love of God and his truth in our hearts, that no temptation may be able to subvert our faith, or to pluck out our charity.

2. This notion plainly supposes the truth of that doctrine, that no man being once in God's favour can ever quite lose it; the truth of which I shall not contest now (nor alledge the many clear passages of Scripture, nor the whole tenour of the Gospel, nor the unanimous consent of all Christendom for fifteen hundred years against it) but shall only take notice, that their notion of faith necessarily presupposing the truth of this doctrine is yet thereby everted: for it follows thence, that no man, who doth not assent to that doctrine, is, or can be a believer: for he that is not assured of the truth of that opinion (although we suppose him assured of his present sincerity, and being in a state of grace) cannot know that he shall be saved: So that only such as agree with them in that opinion can be believers, which is somewhat hard, or rather very absurd; and to aggravate this inconvenience I adjoin; 3. that according to their notion scarce any man (except some have had an especial revelation concerning their salvation) before the late alterations in Christendom, was a believer; for before that time it hardly appears, that any man did believe, as they do, that a man cannot fall from grace; and therefore scarce any man could be assured, that he should be saved; and therefore scarce any man could be a believer in their sense.

St. *Augustine* himself (whose supposed patronage stands them in so much stead upon other occasions) hath often affirmed, that divers have had given them that faith, that charity, that justification, wherein if they had died, they should have been saved; who yet were not saved: which persons surely, when they were in that good state, (admitting them according to St. *Augustine's* supposal to have been in it) were as capable of knowing their salvation, as any other man can be, yea St. *Augustine* himself (considering that *Accidere cuiquam quod potest, cuivis potest*, what was another man's case might be his, there being no ground of difference) could not be more sure of his own salvation at any time, than such persons were at that time: According to St. *Augustine's* judgment therefore no man could know that he should be saved (his salvation depending upon perseverance, which in his opinion not being given to all, must as to our knowledge (whatever it might be in respect to God's decree) be contingent and uncertain) it follows I say upon his suppositions, yea he expressly affirms it; (*lib. 2. de homo pers.*) *Itaq;* (says he) *utrum quisq; hoc (perseverantia) munus acceperit, quamdiu hanc vitam ducit, incertum est: Whether any have received this gift of perseverance while he leads this life is uncertain.*

Wherefore St. *Augustine* could not be assured of his own salvation; and therefore (according to these mens sense) he was no believer, no Christian; which I suppose yet they will not assert, though it be so plainly consequent on their own position. I might, 4. ask of them, if a man should confess ingenuously, that although he did hope for mercy from God in that day, yet that he was not assured of his salvation, whether such a person should be rejected from Christian communion, as no believer: It seems, according to their notion of faith, he should; since by his own (in this particular infallible) judgment it is notorious that he (as being no believer) hath no title unto, or interest in the privileges of Christianity; but this proceeding would very much depopulate the

—nec sibi quisq; ita notus est, ut sit de sua castina conversatione securus. Aug. Ep. 121. ad Probam. In hoc mundo, & in hac vita nulla anima possit esse securo. Ibid. Quamdiu vivimus, in certamine sumus, & quamdiu in certamine nulla certa est victoria. Hier. adv. Polog. 2. 2.

Church, and wish from it, I fear, the best, (the most humble and modest, yea the wisest and soberest) members thereof.

But so much I think suffices for the removal of that new harsh notion, to say no worse of it.

*Vid. Amel.
Med. lib. 1.
cap. 27.
Christus ad-
quatum ob-
jectum. Amel.*

There is another more new than that, devised by some (who perceived the inconveniences of the former notions, yet it seems did affect to substitute some new fine one in their room) which if it be not so plainly false, yet is (it seems) more obscure and intricate: it is this; that Faith is not an assent to propositions of any kind, but a recumbency, leaning, resting, rolling upon, adherency to (for they express themselves in these several terms, and others like them) the person of Christ; or, an apprehending and applying to our selves the righteousness of Christ; his person it self, and his righteousness, as simple incomplex things; not any proposition (that they expressly caution against) are the objects, say they, of our faith: they compare our faith to a hand that lays hold upon Christ, and applies his righteousness; and to an eye that looks upon him, and makes him present to us; and by looking on him (as on the brazen Serpent) cures us: but this notion is so intricate, these phrases are so unintelligible, that I scarce believe the devisers of them did themselves know what they meant by them; I do not; I am sure: for what it is for one body to lean upon, or to be rolled on another; what for one body to reach at, and lay hold upon another; what it is to apply a garment to one's body, or a salve to one's wounds, I can easily understand; but what it is for a man's mind to lean upon a person (otherwise than by assenting unto some proposition he speaks, or relying upon some promise he makes) to apply a thing, otherwise than by consenting to some proposition concerning that thing, I cannot apprehend, or reach, there is not (as we noted before) any faculty or operation of a man's mind, which answers the intent of such notions or phrases. Let me put this case: suppose a great Province had generally revolted from its Sovereign, whereby the People thereof had all deserved extreme punishment suitable to such an offence; but that the King moved with pity, and upon the intercession of his only beloved Son (together with a satisfaction offered and performed by him) should resolve to grant a general pardon to them, upon just, and fit, and withal, very easie terms; And that for the execution of this gracious purpose toward them, he should depute and send his Son himself among them to treat with them, by him declaring his merciful intentions toward them, with the conditions, upon compliance wherewith, all, or any of them should be pardon'd their offence, and received into favour; those conditions being, suppose it, that first they should receive and acknowledge his Son for such as he professed himself to be (the King's Son indeed, who truly brought such a message unto them from his Majesty) then that they should seriously resolve with themselves, and solemnly engage to return unto their due allegiance; undertaking faithfully for ever after to observe those laws, which the said Prince in his Father's name should propound unto them. Suppose farther, that the Prince in pursuance of this commission and design, being come into the Country, should there send all about Officers of his, injoining them to discover the intent of his coming, what he offered, and upon what terms; withal, empowering them in his name to receive those, who complied, into favour, declaring them pardoned of all their Offences, and restored to the benefit of the King's protection, and all the privileges of loyal subjects; suppose now, that these Officers should go to the people, and speak to them in this manner: The King makes an overture of pardon and favour unto you upon condition, that any one of you will recumbe, rest, lean upon, or roll himself upon the person of his Son (rest upon his person, not only rely upon his word, that you are to understand) or in case you will lay hold upon, and apply to your selves his Son's righteousness, by which he hath procured of the King his Father, this mercy and favour for you (not only being persuaded that he hath performed thus much for you, this is not enough) do you think these messengers should thus well express themselves, or perform their message handsomely and with advantage? Should not they do much better, laying aside such words of metaphor and mystery, to speak in plain language; telling them, that their King his Son (by plain characters discernable to be truly such) was come among them upon such an intention;

attention; that if they would acknowledge him, and undertake thereafter to obey him, they should receive a full pardon, with divers other great favours and advantages thereby? the case is apparently so like to that which stands between God and man, and doth so fully resemble the nature of the Evangelical dispensation, that I need not make any application, or use any more argument to refute that notion; I shall only say that I conceive these new phrases (for such they are) not known to ancient Christians, not delivered, either in terms, or sense in Scripture, for the places alledged in favour or proof of them by *A-mes*, one of the first broachers of them, (all we may presume that they could find any-wise seeming to favour their notion) do not, as, if time would permit, might easily be shewed, import any such thing, (but are strangely misapplied) that I say these phrases do much obscure the nature of this great duty, and make the state of things in the Gospel, more difficult and dark than it truly is; and thereby seem to be of bad consequence, being apt to beget in people both dangerous presumptions and sad perplexities: for they hearing that they are only, or mainly bound to have such a recumbency upon Christ, or to make such an application of his righteousness, they begin (accordingly as they take themselves to be directed) to work their minds to it; and when they have hit upon that posture of fancy, which they guess to suit their Teachers meaning, then they become satisfied, and conceit they believe well, although perhaps they be ignorant of the principles of the Christian faith, and indisposed to obey the precepts of our Lord: sometimes, on the other side, although they well understand, and are persuaded concerning the truth of all necessary Christian doctrines, and are well disposed to observe God's commandments, yet because they cannot tell whether they apprehend Christ's person dexterously, or apply to themselves his righteousness in the right manner, as is prescribed to them (of which it is no wonder that they should doubt, since it is so hard to know what the doing so means) they become disturbed and perplexed in their minds; questioning whether they do believe or no: Thus by these notions (or phrases rather) are some men tempted fondly to presume, and other good people are wofully discouraged by them; both being thence diverted, or withdrawn from their duty: whereas what it is to believe, as Christians anciently did understand it, and as we have assayed to explain it, is very easie to conceive; and the taking it so, can have no other than very good influence upon practice, as both reason (as we have insinuated) shews, and the Scripture largely and plainly affirms. But let thus much suffice for the enquiry concerning the genuine nature and notion of Faith proper to this place (that faith by which in this Text we are said to be Justified) the other particulars I cannot so much as touch upon at this time.

I end with those good prayers of our Church:

• O Lord, from whom all good things do come, Grant to us thy humble servants, *Fifth Sunday after Easter.*
that by thy holy inspiration we may think those things that be good; and by thy merciful guiding may perform the same, through our Lord Jesus Christ.
Amen.

Almighty and Everlasting Lord, give unto us the increase of faith, hope and charity, and that we may obtain that which thou dost promise, make us to love that which thou dost command, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *14th. Sunday after Trinity.* Amen.

I Believe, &c.

SERMON V.

OF

JUSTIFICATION

BY

FAITH.

R O M. V. 1.

Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.

IN order to the understanding of these words, I did formerly propound divers particulars to be considered and discussed: the *first* was, What that Faith is, by which Christians are said to be justified? This I have dispatched: The *next* is, What Justification doth import? the which I shall now endeavour to explain; and I am concerned to perform it with the more care and diligence, because the right notion of this term hath in latter times been canvassed with so much vehemence of dissension and strife.

In former times, among the *Fathers* and the *School-men*, there doth not appear to have been any difference or debate about it; because (as it seems) men commonly having the same apprehensions about the matters, to which the word is applicable, did not so much examine or regard the strict propriety of expression concerning them: consenting in *things*, they did not fall to cavil and contend about the exact meaning of *words*. They did indeed consider distinctly no such point of doctrine as that of *Justification*, looking upon that *word* as used incidentally in some places of Scripture, for expression of points more clearly expressed in other terms; wherefore they do not make much of the *word*, as some *Divines* now do.

But in the beginning of the Reformation, when the discovery of some great errors (from the corruption and ignorance of former times) crept into vogue, rendred all things the subjects of contention, and multiplied controversies, there did arise hot disputes about this point; and the right stating thereof seemed a matter of great importance; nor scarce was any controversy prosecuted with greater zeal and earnestness: whereas yet (so far as I can discern) about the real points of doctrine, whereto this *word* (according to any sense pretended) may relate, there

Περὶ λέξε-
ων μικρο-
λογίαν. Naz.

Articulus
stantis & ca-
dentis Eccle-
siae. Luth.

there hardly doth appear any material difference; and all the Questions depending, chiefly seem to consist about the manner of expressing things, which all agree in; or about the extent of the signification of words capable of larger or stricter acceptation: whence the debates about this point, among all sober and intelligent persons, might (as I conceive) easily be resolved or appeased, if men had a mind to agree, and did not love to wrangle; if at least a consent in believing the same things, although under some difference of expression, would content them, so as to forbear strife.

To make good which observation, tending as well to the illustration of the whole matter, as to the stating and decision of the controversies about it, let us consider the several divine acts, to which the term Justification is, according to any sense pretended, applicable: I say divine acts; for that the Justification we treat of is an act of God simple or compound (in some manner) respecting, or terminated upon man, is evident, and will not I suppose be contested; the words of St. Paul in several places so clearly declaring it; as in that, *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? it is God that justifieth*, and in that, *To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness*. Now according to the tenour of Christian doctrine such acts are these.

1. God (in regard to the obedience performed to his will by his beloved Son, and to his intercession) is so reconciled to mankind, that unto every person, who doth sincerely believe the Gospel, and (repenting of his former bad life) doth seriously resolve thereafter to live according to it, he doth (upon the solemn obligation of that faith, and profession of that resolution in baptism) entirely remit all past offences, accepting his person, receiving him into favour; assuming him into the state of a loyal subject, a faithful servant, a dutiful Son; and bestowing on him all the benefits and privileges suitable to such a state; according to those passages: *It behoved Christ to suffer—and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations: Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins; and, To him give all the Prophets witness, that through his name, whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins; and, God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their sins; and in other places innumerable.* Luke 24. 47. Acts 2. 38. 3. 19. 5. 31. Acts 10. 43. 2 Cor. 5. 19. Rom. 3. 24. 25.

2. As any person persisting in that sincere faith, and serious purpose of obedience, doth assuredly continue in that state of grace, and exemption from the guilt of sin; so in case that out of humane frailty such a person doth fall into the commission of sin, God (in regard to the same performances and intercessions of his Son) doth upon the confession and repentance of such a person remit his sin, and retain him in or restore him to favour; according to those sayings of St. John: *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness; and, If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the righteous.* 1 John 1. 9. 2. 1.

3. To each person sincerely embracing the Gospel, and continuing in steadfast adherence thereto, God doth afford his holy Spirit, as a principle productive of all inward sanctity and vertuous dispositions in his heart, enabling also and quickning him to discharge the conditions of faith and obedience required from him, and undertaken by him; that which is by some termed making a person just, infusion into his Soul of righteousness, of grace, of vertuous habits; in the Scripture style it is called *acting by the Spirit, bestowing the gift of the holy Ghost, renovation of the holy Ghost, creation to good works, sanctification by the Spirit, &c.* which phrases denote partly the collation of a principle enabling to perform good works, partly the design of religion tending to that performance. Rom. 8. 14. Gal. 4. 6. 1 Cor. 2. 12. 2 Tim. 2. 7. Acts 2. 38. Rom. 8. 9. Tit. 3. 5. (Eph. 2. 22.) Eph. 2. 10. 4. 23.

Now all these acts (as by the general consent of Christians, and according to the sense of the antient Catholick Church, so) by all considerable Parties seeming to dissent, and so earnestly disputing about the Point of Justification, are acknowledged and ascribed unto God; but with which of them the act of Justification is solely or chiefly coincident; whether it signifieth barely some one of them, or extendeth to more of them, or comprehendeth them all (according to the constant meaning of the word in Scripture) are questions coming under debate, and so eagerly prosecuted: Of which questions whatever the true resolution be, it cannot

cannot meet, be of so great consequence, as to cause any great anger or animosity in dissenters one toward another, seeing they all conspire in avowing the acts, whatever they be, meant by the word *Justification*, altho' in other terms; seeing all the dispute is about the precise and adequate notion of the word *Justification*: whence those questions might well be waved as unnecessary grounds of contention; and it might suffice to understand the points of doctrine which it relateth to in other terms, laying that aside as ambiguous and litigious. Yet because the understanding the rightest, or most probable notion of the word, may somewhat conduce to the interpretation of the Scriptures, and to clearing the matters couched in it, somewhat also to the satisfaction of persons considerate and peaceable, I shall employ some care faithfully (without partiality to any side) to search it out, and declare it: in order whereto I shall propound some Observations, seeming material.

Verba valent
ut nummi.

I. Whereas it were not hard to speak much, and criticise about the primitive sense of the word, and about its various acceptions both in holy Scripture and other Writings, I do question whether doing that would be pertinent, or conducive to our purpose of understanding its right notion here: for knowing the primitive sense of words can seldom or never determine their meaning any where, they often in common use declining from it; and the knowing variety of acceptions doth at most yield only the advantage of chusing one futable to the subject matter and occasion. We are not therefore to learn the sense of this word from mere *Grammarians*.

Ἐδικαίωσαν,
ἀντὶ τοῦ δικαιοῦ
ἐκλογαίαν.
B. l. in Syn.
Chalced.
Can. 5.

II. The sense of this word is not to be searched in extraneous Writers; both because no matter like that we treat upon did ever come into their use or consideration, and because they do seldom or never use the word in a sense any-wise congruous to this matter: in them most commonly the word *δικαίω* doth signify (as the like word *ᾠζιόω*) to deem a thing just, equal, or fit (or simply to deem about a thing.) Sometimes also (yet not often, as I take it) being applied to an action, or cause, it importeth to make it appear lawful, or just, as when we ordinarily say to justify what one saith or doeth; (whence *δικαίωμα* in *Aristotle* is an argument proving the justice of a cause, *firmamentum causæ*) but in them very seldom or never it is applied to persons; and an example, I conceive, can hardly be produced, wherein it is so used.

2 Sam. 15. 4.

III. In the Sacred Writings at large it is commonly applied to persons, and that according to various senses, some more wide and general, some more restrained and particular. It there sometime denoteth generally to exercise any judicial act upon, in regard unto, or in behalf of a person; to do him right, or justice, in declaring the merit of his cause, or pronouncing sentence about him; in acquitting or condemning him for any cause, in obliging him to or exempting him from any burthen, in dispensing to him any reward or punishment, indifferently: thus *Absalom* said, *O that I were made a judge in the Land, that every man, which hath any suit or cause might come unto me, and I would justify him*, that is, *I would do him right*: and, in the 82d Psalm, this charge is given to the Princes, or Judges; *Defend the poor, and fatherless, and justify the poor and needy*; that is, *do right and justice to them*.

Pl. 82. 3.

Deut. 25. 1.

1 Kings 8. 32.

2 Chr. 6. 23.

Prov. 17. 15.

Matt. 12. 37.

(Eli. 5. 23.

43. 9.)

But more particularly the word signifieth (and that according to the most usual and current acception) so to do a man right, as to pronounce sentence in his favour, as to acquit him from guilt, to excuse him from burthen, to free him from punishment; whence we most often meet with the word placed in direct opposition to that of condemnation: as in that law, *If there be a controversy between men, and they come unto judgment, that the Judges may judge them, then they shall justify the righteous, and condemn the wicked*: And in *Solomon's* prayer, *Then hear thou in heaven, and do, and judge thy servants, condemning the wicked, to bring his way upon his head, and justifying the righteous, to give him according to his righteousness*: and in the *Proverbs*, *He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, even both are an abomination unto the Lord*: And, in the Gospel, our Saviour saith, *By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned*.

Matt. 11. 19.

In consequence upon this sense, and with a little deflection from it, to justify a person sometime denoteth to approve him, or esteem him just, a mental judgment, as it were, being passed upon him; so *wisdom* is said to be justified, that is,

is, approved by her children: So in the Gospel some persons are said to justify ^{Luke 10. 29.} themselves, that is, to conceit themselves righteous: and the ^{16. 15.} Publican went ^{Luke 18. 14.} home justified rather than the Pharisee, that is, more approved and accepted by God: So also it is said, that ^{Luke 7. 29.} All the people and the Publicans justified God, being baptized with John's baptism; they justified God, that is, they declared their approbation of God's proceeding, in the mission of John.

In like manner, Justification is taken for exemption from burthens; as where in the Acts St. Paul saith, *And from all things, from which by the law of Moses* ^{Acts 13. 39.} *ye could not be justified, in this is every one that believeth justified.*

It may also sometimes be taken for deliverance from punishment; as where in the Law God saith, *The innocent and righteous slay thou not; for I will not* ^{Exod. 23. 7.} *justify the wicked;* that is, not let him escape without impunity; according to that in the Proverbs, *Tho' band join in hand, the wicked shall not go unpunished.*

IV. We may observe, that (as every man hath some phrases and particular forms of speech in which he delighteth, so) this term is somewhat peculiar to St. Paul, and hardly by the other Apostles applied to that matter, which he expresseth thereby: they usually in their Sermons, and Epistles, do speak the same thing (whatever it be) in other terms, more immediately expressive of the matter. St. James indeed doth use it, but not so much, it seemeth, according to his usual manner of speech, as occasionally; to refute the false and pestilent conceits of some persons, who mistaking St. Paul's expressions and doctrine, did pervert them to the maintenance of Solifidian, Eunomian and Antinomian positions, greatly prejudicial to good practice. And seeing the term is so proper to St. Paul in relation to this matter, the right sense and notion thereof seemeth best derivable from considering the nature of the subject he treateth on, observing the drift of his discourse and manner of his reasoning, comparing the other phrases he useth equivalent to this, and interpretative of his meaning. ^{Acts 13. 38. 2. 38. 3. 19. 5. 30. 10. 43. 22. 16. Luke 24. 47.}

V. Following this method of enquiry, I do observe and affirm that the last notion of the word, as it is evidently most usual in the Scripture, so it best suiteth to the meaning of St. Paul here, and otherwhere commonly, where he treateth upon the same matters; that God's justifying solely, or chiefly, doth import his acquitting us from guilt, condemnation and punishment, by free pardon and remission of our sins, accounting us and dealing with us as just persons, upright and innocent in his sight and esteem: the truth of which notion I shall by divers arguments and considerations make good.

I. This sense doth best agree to the nature of the subject matter, and to the design of St. Paul's discourse; which I take to be this, the asserting the necessity, reasonableness, sufficiency and excellency of the Christian dispensation in order to that, which is the end of all Religion, the bringing men to happiness, and consequently to the rendring men acceptable to God Almighty, who is the sole Author and donour of happiness; this is that, which in general he aimeth to assert and maintain.

This, I say, is that which he chiefly driveth at, to maintain, that it is not unreasonable that God should so proceed with men (whose good and felicity, as their gracious Maker, he greatly tendreth) as the Christian Gospel declareth him to do, but that rather such proceeding was necessary and fit, in order to our salvation; and withall conformable to the ordinary method of God's proceedings toward the same purpose.

Now God's proceeding with man according to the Gospel, the general tenour thereof doth set out to be this; that God, out of his infinite goodness and mercy, in consideration of what his beloved Son, our blessed Lord, hath performed and suffered, in obedience to his will, and for the redemption of mankind (which by transgression of his laws, and default in duty toward him, had grievously offended him and fallen from his favour, was involved in guilt, and stood obnoxious to punishment) is become reconciled to them (passing by, and fully pardoning all offences by them committed against him) so as generally to proffer mercy upon certain reasonable and gentle terms, to all that shall sincerely embrace such overtures of mercy, and heartily resolve to comply with those terms required by him; namely, the returning and adhering

to him, forsaking all impiety and iniquity, constantly persisting in faithful obedience to his holy commandments: this, I say, is the proceeding of God, which the Christian Gospel doth especially hold forth, and which, according to our Lord's commission and command, the Apostles did first preach to men; as whosoever will consider the drift and tenour of their preaching, will easily discern; which therefore St. Paul may reasonably be supposed here to assert and vindicate against the Jews, and other Adversaries of the Gospel; consequently the terms he useth should be so interpreted as to express that matter; whence being justified, will imply that which a person embracing the Gospel doth immediately receive from God, in that way of grace and mercy, viz. an absolution from his former crimes, an acquittance from his debts, a state of innocence and guiltlessness in God's sight, an exemption from vengeance and punishment; all that which by him sometimes, and by the other Apostles, is couched under the phrases of *remission of sins*, having sins *blotted out* and *washed away*, being *cleansed from sin*; and the like: Thus considering the nature of the matter, and design of his discourse, would incline us to understand this word.

2. Again, the manner of his prosecuting his discourse, and the arguments by which he inferreth his conclusions concerning the Gospel, do confirm this notion. He discourseth, and proveth at large, that all mankind, both Jews and Gentiles, were *shut up under sin*, that *all had sinned, and did fall short of the glory of God* (that is, of rendring him his due glory by dutiful obedience) that *every mouth was stopped*, having nothing to say in defence of their transgressions, and that *all the world stood obnoxious to the severity of God's judgments*; that not only the light of nature was insufficient to preserve men from offending inexcusably, even according to the verdict of their own consciences, but that the written Law of God had (to manifold experience) proved ineffectual to that purpose, serving rather to *work wrath* to bring men under a curse, to aggravate their guilt, to convince them of their sinfulness, to discourage and perplex them; upon which general state of men (so implicated in guilt, so liable to wrath) is consequent a necessity either of condemnation and punishment, or of mercy and pardon.

He doth also imply (that which in the *Epistle to the Galatians*, where he prosecuteth the same argument, is more expressly delivered) that no precedent dispensation had exhibited any manifest overture, or promise of pardon; for the light of nature doth only direct unto duty, condemning every man in his own judgment and conscience, who transgresseth it, but as to pardon in case of transgression, it is blind and silent; and the law of Moses rigorously exacteth punctual obedience, denouncing in express terms a condemnation and curse to the transgressors thereof in any part; from whence he collecteth, that *no man can be justified by the works of the Law* (natural, or Mosaical; or that no precedent dispensation can justify any man) and that *a man is justified by faith*, or hath absolute need of such a justification as that, which the Gospel declareth and tendreth; λογίζομεθα ἐν, *we hence* (saith he) *collect, or argue, that a man is justified by faith, without the works of the Law*: which justification must therefore import the receiving that free pardon, which the criminal and guilty world did stand in need of, which the forlorn and deplorable state of mankind did groan for, without which no man could have any comfort in his mind, any hope, or any capacity of salvation. If the state of Man was a state of rebellion, and consequently of heinous guilt, of having forfeited God's favour, of obnoxiousness to God's wrath; then that justification, which was needful, was a dispensation of mercy, remitting that guilt, and removing those penalties.

Again, St. Paul commendeth the excellency of the Evangelical dispensation from hence, that it entirely doth ascribe the justification of men to God's mercy and favour, excluding any merit of Man, any right or title thereto, grounded upon what Man hath performed; consequently advancing the glory of God, and depressing the vanity of Man: *If* (saith he) *Abraham were justified by works, he had whereof to boast, for that to him, who worketh, wages are not reckoned as bestowed in favour, but are paid as debt*; so it would be, if men were justified by works,

works, they might claim to themselves the due consequences thereof, impunity and reward; they would be apt to please themselves, and boast of the effects arising from their own performances; but if, as the Gospel teacheth, *men are justified freely (gratis) by God's mercy and grace*, without any regard to what they formerly have done, either good or bad, those who have lived wickedly and impiously (upon their compliance with the terms proposed to them) being no less capable thereof, than the most righteous and pious persons; then *where is boasting?* it is excluded; then surely no man can assume any thing to himself, then all the glory and praise are due to God's frank goodness: the purport of which reasoning (so often used) doth imply, that a man's justification signifieth his being accepted or approved as just, standing *rectus in curia*, being in God's esteem, and by his sentence, absolved from guilt and punishment, the which cannot otherwise be obtained, than from divine favour declared and exhibited in the Gospel; according as St. Paul elsewhere fully speaketh: *To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved; in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace.* Rom. 3. 24. Rom. 4. 5. Rom. 3. 27. Eph. 2. 9.

Again, St. Paul expresseth Justification as an act of judgment performed by God, whereby he declareth his own righteousness, or justice; that justice consisting in acceptance of a competent satisfaction offered to him in amends for the debt due to him, and in reparation of the injury done unto him, in consequence thereof acquitting the debtor, and remitting the offence; so those words declare: *Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare at this time his righteousness, that he might be just, and the justifier of him, which believeth in Jesus:* Justification there we see is expressed a result of Christ's redemption, and the act of God consequent thereon; so is remission of sins; God, by them jointly demonstrating his justice and goodness, so that they may be well conceived the same thing diversly expressed, or having several names according to some divers formalities of respect. So in other places, sometimes justification, sometimes remission of sins are reckoned the proper and immediate effects of our Saviour's passion: *Being* (saith St. Paul in the 5th to the Romans) *justified by his blood, we shall be saved by him from wrath:* and *In whom* (saith he again in the first of the Epistle to the Ephesians) *we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins;* which argueth the equivalency of these terms. Rom. 3. 24. Rom. 5. 9. Eph. 1. 7. Col. 1. 14.

So likewise a main point of the Evangelical Covenant on God's part is made justifying of a man by his faith, or upon it; and remission of sins upon the same condition, is also made the like principal point, which sometime is put alone, as implying all the benefits of that covenant. Gal. 3. per tot. Rom. 11. 27.

Again, justification is by St. Paul made the immediate consequent, or special adjunct of Baptism; therein, he saith, *we die to sin* (by resolution and engagement to lead a new life in obedience to God's commandment) and so dying we are said to be justified from sin (that which otherwise is expressed, or expounded, by being freed from sin;) now the freedom from sin obtained in Baptism is frequently declared to be the remission of sin then conferred, and solemnly confirmed by a visible seal. Rom. 6. 23. Rom. 6. 6, 7. 6. 18, 22.

Whereas also so frequently we are said to be *justified by faith*, and according to the general tenour of Scripture, the immediate consequent of faith is Baptism; therefore dispensing the benefits consigned in Baptism, is coincident with justification; and that dispensation is frequently signified to be the cleansing us from sin by entire remission thereof. Eph. 5. 26. Tit. 3. 5. Acts 13. 38. 22. 16.

3. Farther, The same notion may be confirmed by comparing this term with other terms and phrases equivalent, or opposite to this of justification.

One equivalent phrase is imputation of righteousness: *As* (saith St. Paul) *David speaketh of that man's blessedness, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works; Blessed are they, whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered; Blessed is the man, to whom the Lord will not impute sin;* whence to him that considers the drift and force of St. Paul's discourse, it will clearly appear,

appear that justification, imputing righteousness, not imputing sin, and remission of sin are the same thing; otherwise the Apostle's discourse would not signifie or conclude any thing.

For confirmation of his discourse (arguing free justification by God's mercy, not for our works) St. Paul also doth alledge that place in the Psalm, *For in thy sight shall no man living be justified*; the sense of which place is evidently this, that no man living, his actions being strictly tried and weighed, shall appear guiltless, or deserve to be acquitted; but shall stand in need of mercy, or can no otherwise be justified than by a special act of grace.

Again, imputing faith for righteousness is the same with justifying by faith (*Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness*) but that imputation is plainly nothing else, but the approving him, and taking him for a righteous person in regard to his faith.

Again, justification is the same with being righteous before God, as appeareth by those words: *Not the hearers of the Law are just before God, but the doers of the Law shall be justified*; but being just before God, plainly signifieth nothing else but being accepted by God, or approved to his esteem and judgment.

Being reconciled to God seemeth also to be the same with being justified by him; as appeareth by these words, *Much more then being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him; for if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by his Life*: where *πολλῷ μᾶλλον δικαιωθέντες*, and *πολλῷ μᾶλλον καταλλάσσονται*, seem to signifie the same; but that reconciliation is interpreted by remission of sins: *God was in Christ, reconciling the World unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them*.

To obtain mercy is another term signifying justification, and what doth that import but having the remission of sins in mercy bestowed on us.

Again, Justification is opposed directly to condemnation: *As (saith he) by the offence of one man (judgment came) upon all men to condemnation, so by the righteousness of one man (the free gift came) upon all men to justification of life (justification of life, that is, a justification so relating to life, or bestowing a promise thereof, as the condemnation opposite thereto respected death, which it threatned.)* In which place St. Paul comparing the first Adam with his actions, and their consequences, to the second Adam with his performances, and what resulted from them, teacheth us, that as the transgression of the first did involve mankind in guilt, and brought consequently upon men a general sentence of death, (forasmuch as all men did follow him in commission of sin;) so the obedience of the second did absolve all men from guilt, and restored them consequently into a state of immortality (all men, under the condition prescribed, who (as it is said) should receive the abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness tendered to them;) the justification therefore he speaketh of doth so import an absolution from guilt and punishment, as the condemnation signifieth a being declared guilty, and adjudged to punishment.

Bellarmino indeed (who in answering to this place objected against his doctrine, blunders extremely, and is put to his trumps of Sophistry) telleth us, that in this place to maintain the parallel or *antithesis* between Adam and Christ, justification must signifie infusion of grace, or putting into a man's soul an inherent righteousness; because Adam's sin did constitute us unjust with an inherent unrighteousness: but (with his favour) justification and condemnation being both of them the acts of God, and it being plain, that God condemning doth not infuse any inherent unrighteousness into man, neither doth he justifying (formally) (if the *antithesis* must be parr,) put any inherent righteousness into him: inherent unrighteousness in the former case may be a consequent of that condemnation, and inherent righteousness may be connected with this justification; but neither *that*, nor *this* may formally signifie those qualities respectively: as the inherent unrighteousness consequent upon Adam's sin is not included in God's condemning, so neither is the inherent righteousness proceeding from our Saviour's obedience contained in God's justifying men.

But

But however most plainly (and beyond all evasions) justification and condemnation are opposed elsewhere in this *Epistle*: *Who* (saith St. Paul) ^{Rom. 8. 33,} *shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect?* (or criminate against them) ^{34. Τίς ἐγκαλέ- σται αὐτοῖς—} *'tis God who justifieth, who is he that condemneth?* what can be more clear, than that there justification signifieth absolution from all guilt and blame?

4. Farther, this notion may be confirmed, by excluding that sense, which in opposition thereto is assigned, according to which justification is said to import not only remission of sin, and acceptance with God, but the making a man intrinsically righteous, by infusing into him (as they speak) a habit of grace, or charity; the putting into a man a *righteousness*, by which (as the Council of Trent expresseth it) *We are renewed in the spirit of our mind, and are not only reputed, but are called, and become truly righteous, receiving righteousness in our selves.* ^{Justitiam in nobis recipien-}

Now admitting this to be true, as in a sense it surely is, that whoever (according to St. Paul's meaning in this *Epistle*) is justified, is also really at the same time endued with some measure of that intrinick righteousness, which those men speak of (for as much as that faith, which is required to justification (being a gift of God, managed by his providence, and wrought by his preventing grace,) doth include a sincere and stedfast purpose of forsaking all impiety, of amendment of life, of obedience to God, which purpose *cleanseth the heart*, and is apt to produce as well inward righteousness of heart, as outward righteousness of practice; for that also to every sound believer upon his faith is bestowed the spirit of God, as a principle of righteousness, dwelling in him, directing, admonishing, exciting him to do well; assisting and enabling him sufficiently to the performance of those conditions, or those duties, which Christianity requireth, and the believer thereof undertaketh; which, the man's honest and diligent endeavour concurring, will surely beget the practice of all righteousness, and in continuance of such practice will render it habitual) avowing, I say, willingly, that such a righteousness doth ever accompany the justification St. Paul speaketh of, yet that sort of righteousness doth not seem implied by the word justification, according to St. Paul's intent, in those places, where he discourseth about justification by faith; for that such a sense of the word doth not well consist with the drift and efficacy of his reasoning, nor with divers passages in his discourse. For,

1. Whereas St. Paul from the general depravation of manners in all men (both Jews and Gentiles) argueth the necessity of such a justification, as the Christian Gospel declareth and exhibiteth, if we should take justification for infusing an inherent quality of righteousness into men, by the like discourse we might infer the imperfection and insufficiency of Christianity it self, and consequently the necessity of another dispensation beside it; for that even all Christians (as Saint James saith) do offend often, and commission of sin doth also much reign among them; so that St. Paul's discourse (justification being taken in this sense) might strongly be retorted against himself. ^{James 3. 2.}

2. Supposing that sense of Justification, a Jew might easily invalidate St. Paul's ratiocination, by saying, that even their Religion did plainly enough declare such a justification, which God did bestow upon all good men in their way, as by their frequent acknowledgments and devotions is apparent; such as those of the Psalmist: *Create in me a clean heart, O God, renew a right Spirit within me. Teach me to do thy will, for thou art my God: Make me to go in the path of thy commandments; incline my heart unto thy Testimonies;* ^{Psal. 51. 10. Psal. 143. 10. Psal. 119. 35,} which sort of prayers God hearing did infuse righteousness, and justified those persons in this sense; so that Christianity herein could not challenge any thing peculiar, or could upon this score appear so necessary, as St. Paul pretendeth. ^{36.}

3. From the justification St. Paul speaketh of, all respect to any works, and to any qualifications in men (such as might beget in them any confidence in themselves, or yield occasion of boasting) is excluded; it cannot therefore well be understood for a constituting Man intrinsically righteous, or

or infusing worthy qualities into him; but rather for an act of God terminated upon a man as altogether unworthy of God's love, as impious, as an enemy, as a pure object of mercy; so it is most natural to understand those expressions, importing the same thing; *God justifieth the ungodly; we being sinners Christ died for us* (purchasing, as the following words imply, justification for us) *being yet enemies we by his death were reconciled* (or justified, for reconciliation and justification, as we before noted, do there signify the same.)

Rom. 4. 5.
5. 8. 5. 10.

Rom. 4. 21.
Rom. 4. 23,
24.

4. *Abraham* is brought in as an instance of a person justified in the same manner, as Christians are according to the Gospel: but his justification was merely the approving and esteeming him righteous, in regard (not to any other good works, but) to his steadfast faith, and strong persuasion concerning the power and faithfulness of God — because *he was fully persuaded, that what God had promised he was able to perform*; to which faith and justification consequent thereon, St. Paul comparing those of Christians subjoineth; *Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him, but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him, that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead.* As then it were an idle thing to fancy a righteousness, upon the score of that belief, dropt into *Abraham*; and as his being justified is expressly called, having righteousness, upon the account of his faith, imputed (or ascribed) to him; So our justification (like and answerable to his) should correspondently be understood, the approving and accounting us, notwithstanding our former transgressions, as righteous persons, in regard to that honest and steadfast faith, wherein we resemble *that Father of the faithful.*

Even St. James himself, when he saith that *Abraham* and *Rahab* Were justified by works, 'tis evident that he meaneth not that they had certain righteous qualities infused into them, or were made thence by God intrinsically more righteous than they were before, but that they were approved and accepted by God, because of the good works they performed (in faith and obedience to God) one of them offering to sacrifice his Son, the other preserving the Spies sent from God's people.

5. The so often using the word Imputation of righteousness, instead of Justification, doth imply this act not to be a transient operation upon the soul of Man, but an act immanent to God's mind, respecting Man only as its object, and translating him into another relative state: With this sense that word excellently well agreeth, otherwise it were obscure, and so apt to perplex the matter, that probably St. Paul would not have used it.

6. Again, When it is said again and again, *that faith is imputed for righteousness*, it is plain enough, that no other thing in Man was required thereto; to say, that he is thereby sanctified, or hath gracious habits infused, is uncouth and arbitrary: the obvious meaning is, that therefore he is graciously accepted and approved, as we said before.

7. We might in fine add, that the word Justification is very seldom, or never used in that sense of making Persons righteous, or infusing righteousness into them. *Bellarmino* and *Grotius*, having searched with all possible diligence, do alledge three or four places, wherein (with some plausible appearance) they pretend it must be so understood; but as they are so few, so are they not any of them thoroughly clear and certain; but are capable to be otherwise interpreted without much straining; The clearest place, *Dan. 12. 3.* the LXX read מצרים, ἀπὸ δικαίων, which the *Hebrew*, and sense will bear. Wherefore the other sense, which we have maintained, being undeniably common and current in the Scripture, and having so many particular reasons shewing it agreeable to St. Paul's intent, seemeth rather to be embraced.

In St. Paul's Epistles I can only find three or four places, wherein the word *Justifying* may with any fair probability be so extended as to signify an internal operation of God upon the Soul of men; they are these;

1 Cor. 6. 11.
* &c.

*And such were some of you; but ye have been washed, but ye have been sanctified, but ye have been justified in the name of Christ Jesus, and * by the Spirit*

rit of our God; where Justification being performed by the Spirit of God, seemeth to imply a spiritual operation upon a man's soul, as an ingredient thereof.

According to his mercy he saved us, by the laver of regeneration, and renew- Tit. 3. 6, 7.
ing of the holy Ghost; which he poured on us richly by Jesus Christ our Saviour;
that being justified by his grace, we may be made heirs, according to the hope of
everlasting life; where God's justifying us by the Grace of Christ seemeth to
include the renewing by the holy Ghost.

He that dieth, is justified from sin; where St. Paul speaking about our obli- Rom. 6. 7.
gation to lead a new life in holy obedience, upon account of our being dedicated
to Christ, and renouncing sin in Baptism, may be interpreted to mean a being
really in our hearts purified and freed from sin.

Whom he predestinated, those he called; and whom he called, those he justified, Rom. 8. 30.
and whom he justified, those he glorified; where the chief acts of God toward
those, who finally shall be saved, being in order purposely recited, and Justifi-
cation being immediately (without interposing Sanctification) coupled to Glo-
rification, the word may seem to comprize Sanctification.

If considering these places (which yet are not clearly prejudicial to the no-
tion we have made good, but may well be interpreted so as to agree thereto)
it shall seem to any, that St. Paul doth not ever so strictly adhere to that no-
tion, as not sometime to extend the word to a larger sense, I shall not much
contend about it: It is an ordinary thing for all Writers to use their words
sometimes in a larger, sometimes in a stricter sense; and it sufficeth to have
shewn, that where St. Paul purposely treateth about the matter we discourse
upon, the purport of his discourse argueth, that he useth it according to that
notion, which we have proposed.

8. I shall only add one small observation, or conjecture, favouring this no-
tion; which is the probable occasion of all St. Paul's discourse and disputation
about this point, which seemeth to have been this: That Christianity should
(upon so slender a condition or performance as that of Faith) tender unto all
persons indifferently, however culpable or flagitious their former lives had been, Vid. Cyrill.
a plenary remission of sins and reception into God's favour, did seem an unrea- adv. Julian.
sonable and implausible thing to many: The Jews could not well conceive, lib. 7. p. 248.
or relish that any man so easily should be translated into a state equal, or supe- where Justifi-
rior to that, which they took themselves peculiarly to enjoy: The Gentiles cation is very
themselves (especially such as conceited well of their own wisdom and vertue) well described.
could hardly digest it: Celsus in Origen could not imagine or admit, that bare
faith should work such a miracle, as presently to turn a dissolute person into
a Saint, beloved of God, and designed to happiness. Jam. 1. 18.

Zozimus faith of Constantine, that he chose Christianity as the only Religion,
that promised impunity and pardon for his enormous practices; intimating
his dislike of that point in our Religion. This prejudice against the Gospel
St. Paul removeth, by shewing, that because of all mens guilt and sinfulness,
such an exhibition of mercy, such an overture of acceptance, such a remission
of sin was necessary in order to salvation, so that without it no man could be
exempted from wrath and misery; and that consequently all other Religions
(as not exhibiting such a remission) were to be deemed in a main point de-
fective: When therefore he useth the word Justification to express this matter,
it is reasonable to suppose, that he intendeth thereby to signify that remission,
or dispensation of mercy.

It may be objected that St. Austin and some others of the Fathers do use the
word commonly according to the sense of the Tridentine Council. I answer,
that the point having never been discussed, and they never having thoroughly
considered the sense of St. Paul, might unawares take the word as it sounded
in Latine, especially the sense they affixed to it, signifying a matter very true
and certain in Christianity. The like hath happened to other Fathers in other
cases; and might happen to them in this, not to speak accurately in points that
never had been sifted by disputation. More I think we need not say in an-
swer to their authority.

VI. So much may suffice for a general explication of the notion; but for a more full clearing of the point, it may be requisite to resolve a question concerning the time when this act is performed, or dispensed; It may be enquired when God justifieth, whether once, or at several times, or continually. To which question I answer briefly:

1. That the justification which St. Paul discourseth of, seemeth in his meaning, only or especially to be that act of grace, which is dispensed to persons at their Baptism, or at their entrance into the Church, when they openly professing their faith, and undertaking the practice of Christian duty, God most solemnly and formally doth absolve them from all guilt, and accepteth them into a state of favour with him; that St. Paul only or chiefly respecteth this act, considering his design, I am inclined to think, and many passages in his discourse seem to imply.

If his design were (as I conceive it probable) to vindicate the proceeding of God, peculiarly declared in the Gospel, in receiving the most notorious and heinous transgressors to grace in Baptism, then especially must the justification he speaketh of relate to that; to confirm which supposition, we may consider, that,

1. In several places Justification is coupled with baptismal regeneration and absolution: *Such were some of you, but ye have been washed, ye have been sanctified, ye have been justified in the name of Christ Jesus:* (where, by the way, being sanctified and being justified seem equivalent terms, as in that place where Christ is said to *have given himself for the Church, that he might sanctify it, and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word*, Sanctification (I conceive) importeth the same thing with Justification. Again, *He saved us by the laver of Regeneration, that having been justified by his grace, we may be made heirs of everlasting life.*

1 Cor. 6. 11.
Eph. 5. 25,
26.
Heb. 10. 29.
Tit. 3. 6, 7.
Heb. 10. 22,
23.

2. St. Paul in expressing this act, as it respecteth the faithful, commonly doth use a tense referring to the past time: he saith not *δικαιώμενοι*, being justified, but *δικαιωθέντες*, having been justified; not *δικαιοῦσθε*, ye are justified, but *δικαιώθητε*, ye have been justified, namely, at some remarkable time, that is, at their entrance into Christianity. (Our Translators do render it according to the present time, but it should be rendred, as I say, in our Text, and in other places.)

Rom. 5. 1, 9.
Tit. 3. 7.
1 Cor. 6. 11.

3. St. Paul, in the 6th to the Romans, discourseth thus; Seeing we in Baptism are cleansed and disentangled from sin, are *dead to it, and so justified from it*, God forbid that we should return to live in the practice thereof, so abusing and evacuating the grace we have received; which discourse seemeth plainly to signify, that he treateth about the justification conferred in Baptism.

Rom. 6.

4. He expresseth the justification he speaketh of by the words *παρέσις τῶν προηγουμένων ἀμαρτιῶν*, the passing over foregoing sins, which seemeth to respect that universal absolution, which is exhibited in Baptism. *Being (saith he) justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness, for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God.*

Rom. 3. 25.

5. The relation this justification hath to faith, being dispensed in regard thereto (or upon condition thereof) doth infer the same: Faith is nothing else but a hearty embracing Christianity, which first exerteth it self by open declaration and avowal in Baptism (when we *believe with our hearts to righteousness, and confess with our mouth to salvation*;) to that time therefore the act of Justification may be supposed especially to appertain: (then, when the Evangelical covenant is solemnly ratified, the grace thereof especially is conferred.) Upon such considerations I conceive that St. Paul's justification chiefly doth respect that act of grace, which God consigneth to us at our Baptism. But farther,

Rom. 10. 10.

2. The vertue and effect of that first justifying act doth continue (we abide in a justified state) so long as we do perform the conditions imposed by God, and undertaken by us at our first justification; *holding fast the profession of our hope without wavering; keeping faith, and a good conscience*; so long as we do not forfeit the benefit of that grace by *making shipwreck of faith and a good conscience*,

Heb. 10. 23.
1 Tim. 1. 19.

science, relapsing into infidelity, or profaneness of life. Our case is plainly like to that of a Subject, who having rebelled against his Prince, and thence incurred his displeasure, but having afterward upon his submission, by the clemency of his Prince, obtained an act of pardon, restoring him to favour, and enjoyment of the protection and privileges suitable to a loyal subject, doth continue in this state, until by forsaking his allegiance, and running again into rebellion, he loseth the benefit of that pardon, that his offence is aggravated thereby; so if we do persevere firm in faith and obedience, we shall (according to the purport of the Evangelical covenant) continue in the state of grace and favour with God, and in effect remain justified; otherwise the virtue of our justification ceaseth; and we in regard thereto are more deeply involved in guilt.

3. Although Justification chiefly signifieth the first act of grace toward a Christian at his Baptism, yet (according to analogy of reason, and affinity in the nature of things) every dispensation of pardon granted upon repentance may be stiled Justification; for as particular acts of repentance, upon the commission of any particular sins, do not so much differ in nature, as in measure or degree from that general conversion, practised in embracing the Gospel; So the grace vouchsafed upon these penitential acts, is only in largeness of extent, and solemnity of administration diversified from that; especially considering that Repentance after Baptism is but a reviving of that first great resolution and engagement we made in Baptism; that remission of sin upon it is only the renovation of the grace then exhibited; that the whole transaction in this case is but a reinstating the covenant then made (and afterward by transgression infringed) upon the same terms, which were then agreed upon; that consequently (by congruous analogy) this remission of sins, and restoring to favour, granted to a penitent, are only the former justification reinforced: whence they may bear its name; but whether St. Paul ever meaneth the word to signify thus, I cannot affirm.

*Penitentia
imitatur Bap-
tismi gratiam. Hier.
adv. Pelag. 1.
10.*

Now according to each of these notions all good Christians may be said to have been justified; they have been justified by a general abolition of their sins, and reception into God's favour in Baptism; they so far have enjoyed the virtue of that gracious dispensation, and continued in a justified state, as they have persisted in faith and obedience; they have upon falling into sin, and rising thence by repentance, been justified by particular remissions. So that *having been justified by faith, they have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

I Believe in God.

S E R M O N VI.

T H E

B E I N G of G O D

Proved from the

Frame of the World.

J E R. 51. 15.

Ier. 10. 12. He hath made the earth by his power, he hath established the World by his wisdom, and hath stretched out the Heaven by his understanding.

THE attentive observation of this World, or visible Frame, is not only in it self a most worthy employment of our thoughts (much more noble than any of those petty cares, which commonly possess, or distract our minds) but if either the example of the best men, or the great usefulness thereof, to the best purposes, can oblige us, even a considerable duty not to be neglected by us. For it is that which affords most cogent and satisfactory arguments to convince us of, and to confirm us in the belief of that truth, which is the foundation of all Religion and piety, The Being of one God, incomprehensibly excellent in all perfections, the maker and upholder of all things: It instructs us not only that God is, but more distinctly shews what he is; declaring his chief and peculiar attributes of wisdom, goodness, and power superlative: It also serves to beget in our minds affections toward God suitable to these notions; a reverent adoration of his unsearchable wisdom; an awful dread of his powerful Majesty; a grateful love of his gracious benignity and goodness: To these uses we find it applied by the best men, not only by the wisest Philosophers among Heathens, but by the holy Prophets of God; who frequently harp upon this string, and make sweetest melody thereon; exciting both in themselves and others, pious thoughts and holy devotions therewith; strengthening their faith in God; advancing their reverence toward him; quickning and enflaming their love of him; magnifying his glory and praise thereby; by the consideration (I say) of those wonderful effects, discernible in nature, or appearing to us in this visible world.

And

Pl. 8. 3. 19. 1.
33. 5. 89. 11.
148. 5. 104. 5.
115. 16. 119.
64. 145. 10.
147. 4.

And if ever to imitate them herein were necessary, it seems to be so now, when a pretence to natural knowledge, and acquaintance with these things hath been so much abused to the promoting of Atheism and Irreligion; when that instrument which was chiefly designed, and is of itself most apt, to bring all reasonable creatures to the knowledge, and to the veneration of their Maker, hath (in a method most preposterous and unnatural) been perverted to contrary ends and effects. To the preventing and removing which abuse, as every man should contribute what he can, so let me be allowed to endeavour somewhat toward it, by representing briefly what my meditation did suggest, serving to declare, that (as the Prophet asserts, or implies in the words I read) even in this visible World, there are manifest tokens, or footsteps by which we may discover it to be the work, or product of one Being, incomprehensibly wise, powerful and good; to whom consequently we must owe the highest respect and love, all possible worship and service. Of these footsteps (or signs) there be innumerable many which singly taken, do discover such perfections to be concerned in the production of them; the relation of several to each other do more strongly and plainly confirm the same; the connexion and correspondence of all together doth still add force and evidence thereto, each attesting to the existence of those perfections, all conspiring to declare them concentred and united in one Cause and Being.

I. View we first singly those things, which are most familiar and obvious to our senses (for only some such I mean to consider, such as any man awake, and in his senses, without any study or skill more than ordinary; without being a deep Philosopher, or a Curious *Vintago*; may with an easie attention observe and discern) View we such objects, I say; for instance first, those plants we every day do see, smell and taste; Have not that number, that figure, that order, that temperament, that whole contexture and contemperation of Parts we discern in them, a manifest relation to those operations they perform? were not such organs so fashioned, and so situated, and so tempered, and in all respects so fitted, some of them in order to the successive propagation of them (that they might in kind never fail or perish, but in that respect become as it were immortal) some in regard to their present nutrition and maintenance (that the individuals themselves might not, before their due period of subsistence run through, be spent, or destroyed) some for shelter and defence against all sort of causes prejudicial to either of those continuances in being respectively; to omit those, which serve for grace and ornament; (Do not, I say, the seed most evidently respect the propagation of the kind; the root the drawing of nourishment, the nervous filaments the conveyance of that; the skin or bark the keeping all together close and safe; the husks and shells preservation of the seed; the leaves defence of the fruit?) that such a constitution of parts is admirably fit for such purposes, we cannot be so stupid as not to perceive; we cannot but observe it necessary, for that by detraction, or altering any of them, we obstruct those effects. Whence then, I enquire, could that fitness proceed? from Chance, or casual motions of matter? But, is it not repugnant to the name and nature of Chance, that any thing regular, or constant should arise from it? That by it causes vastly many in number and different in quality (such as are the ingredients into the frame of the least organ in a plant) should not once, not sometimes, not often only, but always in one continual unaltered method concur to the same end and effect (to the same useful end, to the same handsome effect?) are not confusion, disparity, deformity, unaccountable change and variety the proper issues of Chance? 'Tis Aristotle's discourse: *That one, or two things, saith he, should happen to be in the same manner, is not unreasonable to suppose; but that all things should conspire by chance, look like a fiction to conceive: what is universal and perpetual cannot result from Chance. We can only,* (saith he

Ira τὸ αὐτὸ, ὡς τὸ αὐτὸ μετέχουσιν, ἢ δὲ καὶ αὐτὰ. Arist. de An. 2. 4.

fortuna amica varietati constantiam respuit. Cic. de Nat. D. 2.

Ὁ λίαν ὑπερβαλλὼν αἰετὶς ἐστὶν ὁ λίαν ὑπερβαλλὼν ἰσχυρὸς θεὸς ὃς δὴ ἐπὶ τὸ διδάσκειν ἐργον, ἥτις καὶ τὸ εὖ συνέχει τὸ πᾶν. Arist. Pol. 7. 4.

Τὸ μέντοι ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ ἑκάστῳ τῶν ἐργῶν ἔχειν, ἐστὶν ἀποτὸν, τὸ δὲ πᾶν ὁμοίως πλάσσειν, οὐκ ἐστὶν, ἀλλὰ δὲ ἐκ τῶν ἐν τοῖς ἐργοῖς τὸ εὖ εἶναι. ἐστὶ τὸ πανταχῶς, καὶ πᾶσι ὑπάρχον τὸ ἀπὸ τῆς τύχης. De Calo 2. 8.

Μόνα γὰρ τὰ εὖ εἶναι εὐλόγως, ὅσα ἐπὶ πολλῶν, ἢ πάντων ὁρῶμεν ὑπάρχειν. Id. de Calo.

again, *with good reason assert, or suppose such causes of things, as we see generally, or frequently to occur.* Now did we ever observe (or ever any man through the whole course of times) any new thing like, or comparable to any of these to spring up casually? do we not with admiration regard (as a thing very rare and unaccountable) in other pieces of matter any gross resemblance to these, that seemeth to arise from contingent motions and occurrences of bodies? If Chance hath formerly produced such things, how comes it, that it doth not sometime now produce the like; whence becomes it for so many ages altogether impotent and idle? is it not the same kind of cause? hath it not the same instruments to work with, and the same materials to work upon? The truth is, as it doth not now, so it did not, it could not ever produce such effects; such effects are plainly improper and incongruous to such a cause: Chance never writ a legible Book; Chance never built a fair house; Chance never drew a neat picture, it never did any of these things, nor ever will; nor can be without absurdity supposed able to do them, which yet are works very gross and rude, very easie and feasible (as it were) in comparison to the production of a flower, or a tree. 'Tis not therefore reasonable to ascribe those things to chance: to what then? will you say, to Necessity? If you do, you do only alter the phrase; for necessary causality (as applicable to this case, and taken without relation to some wisdom, or counsel that established it) is but another name for chance; they both are but several terms denoting blindness, and unadvisedness in action; both must imply a fortuitous determination of causes, acting without design or rule. A fortuitous determination, I say; for motions of matter, not guided by art, or counsel, must be in their rise fortuitous (inasmuch as that according to the nature of the thing there is no repugnance, and we may easily conceive it possible, that the matter might have been moved otherwise; there being therein no principle originally determining it to this more than to that sort of motion) and the same motions in their process must be determinate, because in their subject there is no principle, whereby it can alter its course. The same effect therefore of this kind, if necessary is casual as to its original, and in that respect may be said to come from chance; if casual, is necessary in the progress, and may thence be said to proceed from necessity. And although we should suppose the beginning of these causes in their action, or motion to be eternal, it were all one; for whether now, or yesterday, or from eternity, infers no difference (except the entangling our minds, and encumbering the case with impertinent circumstances) as to our purpose; not the circumstance of the time, but the quality of the cause being only here considerable; the same causes (abstracting from all counsel ordering them) being alike apt, or inept yesterday as to day, always as sometimes, from all eternity, as at any set time to produce such effects. Neither can we therefore reasonably attribute the effects we speak of to necessity; except only to such an hypothetical necessity, as implies a determination from causes acting by will and understanding; of such a necessity matter is very susceptible; being perfectly obedient to art directing it with competent force; As on the other hand we find it by reason and experience altogether unapt, without such direction, of it self (that is either necessarily or contingently) to come into any regular form, or to pursue any constant course; it being, as we see, shattered into particles innumerable, different in size, shape and motion, according to all variety more than imaginable; thence only fit in their proceedings to cross and confound each other: The determination therefore of such causes as these, to such ends and effects, can be only the result of wisdom, art and counsel, which alone (accompanied with sufficient power) can digest things, void of understanding, into handsome order, can direct them unto fit uses, can preserve them in a constant tenour of action; These effects must therefore, I say, proceed from wisdom, and that no mean one, but such as greatly surpasses our comprehension, joined with a power equally great: For to digest bodies so very many, so very fine and subtle, so divers in motion and tendency, that they shall never hinder or disturb one another, but always conspire to the same design,

design, is a performance exceedingly beyond our capacity to reach, how it could be contrived, or accomplished; all the endeavours of our deepest skill, and most laborious industry cannot arrive to the producing of any work not extremely inferiour to any of these, not in comparison very simple and base; neither can our wits serve to devise, nor our sense to direct, nor our hand to execute any work, in any degree like to those. So that it was but faintly, though truly, said of him in *Cicero*, concerning things of this kind:

* *Nature's powerful sagacity no skill, no hand, no artist can follow by imitati-*

on.

* *Natura solertiam nulla ars, nulla mā-*

nus, nemo opifex consequi possit imitando. Cic. de N. D. pag. 83.

And if we have reason to acknowledge so much wisdom and power discovered in one plant, and the same consequently multiplied in so many thousands of divers kinds; how much more may we discern them in any one animal, in all of them? the parts of whom in unconceivable variety, in delicate minuteness, in exquisiteness of shape, position and temper do indeed so far exceed the other, as they appear designed to functions far more various and more noble; the enumeration of a few whereof, obvious to our sense, in some one living creature, together with conjectures about their manner of operation, and their use, how much industry of man hath it employed; how many volumes hath it filled, and how many more may it do, without detecting a ten thousandth part of what is there most obvious and easie; without piercing near the depth of that wisdom, which formed so curious a piece? So much however is palpably manifest, that each of these so many organs was designed, and fitted on purpose to that chief use, or operation we see it to perform; this of them to continue the kind, that to preserve the *individuum*; this to discern what is necessary, convenient or pleasant to the creature; or what is dangerous, offensive or destructive thereto; that to pursue or embrace, to decline or shun it; this to enjoy what is procured of good; that to remove what is hurtful or useless; or to guard from mischief and injury; That each one is furnished with such apt instruments, suitable to its particular needs, appetites, capacities, stations is most apparent; And I must therefore here ask again (and that with more advantage) whence this could proceed: whence all these parts came to be fashioned and suited; all of them so necessary, or so convenient, that none without the imperfection and the prejudice of the creature, some not without its destruction can be wanting? who shaped and tempered those hidden subtile springs of life, sense, imagination, memory, passion; who impressed on them a motion so regular, and so durable, which through so many years, among so many adverse contingencies assailing it, is yet so steadily maintained? can this however proceed from giddy chance, or blind necessity? could ever (of old, or lately 'tis all one) senseless matter jumble it self so fortunately, into so wonderful postures, so that of those innumerable myriads of atoms, or small insensible bodies (which compose each of these curious engines) none should in its roving miss the way; none fail to stop and seat it self in that due place, where exactest art would have disposed it? Could so many, so dense, so narrow marks be hit without the aim

of a most piercing and unerring eye; without the guidance of a most steady and immoveable hand? all that grace and beauty which so delights our sense beholding it; and all that correspondence and symmetry which so satisfies our mind considering it; all that virtue and energy; extending to performances so great and admirable, must they be ascribed to causes of no worth, and supposed done to no purpose? That eye which reaches the very stars, and in a moment renders all the world as it were present to the creature that useth it; that ear which perceives the least stirring of the air about it, and so subtly distinguishes the smallest differences in its motion; that tongue which so readily is composed to imitate so many petty diversities of tune; those other organs, which are affected by the least breath or vapour, by the least tangle or favour, so that it by them

* *Ἐπεὶ δὲ καὶ τῶν μελῶν ἀπάντων τὴν διάπλασιν, τὸ χεῖμα, τὰς ἐνεργείας, τὴν πρὸς ἀλλήλα συμφωνίαν καὶ πείρας πόλεως εὐνομεμένης καὶ εὐλασθεύουσας τοὺς πολίτας ἔχουσιν ἀκρίβειαν οὕτως τῶν μελῶν τέτων πρὸς ἀλλήλα πολιτείαν. Chrys. Tom. 6. Or. 69.*

vil. Chrys.
And. id.

can

can both perceive the presence, and distinguish the quality of whatever is near, that it may not be disappointed in missing what is beneficial, nor be surprized by the assault of what is noxious thereto; all these and many more,

Μή τι ἀχρηστότερον ταῖς ὁρῶντες ὀπλίσ-
ναι; τί ἐν ἡ συνεχρήσατο καὶ ταύτης
ὡς μάλιστα περὶ πάντας ἐδύνατο; ἡ δὲ
κεῖσε δὲ αὐτῆς τὸ ἀρρεν καὶ τὸ θῆλυ, &c.
Epiet. I. 16.

the defect, distemper, or dislocation of which (would be disgraceful, incommodious, or destructive to the creature; all these I say, can any man, endowed with common sense, or ordinary ingenuity affirm to have proceeded from any other cause, than from a wisdom and power incomprehensible? May not the most excellent pieces of humane artifice, the fairest structures, the finest portraictures, the most ingenious and useful enquiries, such as we are wont most to admire and commend, with infinitely more ease, happen to exist without any contrivance or industry spent upon them? if we cannot allow those rude imitations of nature, to spring up of themselves, but as soon as we espy them are ready to acknowledge them products of excellent art, though we know not the artist, nor did see him work; how much more reason is there that we should believe those works of nature, so incomparably more accurate, to proceed also from art, although invisible to us, and performing its workmanship by a secret hand? I can assure you of those, who have with greatest attention contemplated these things, and who pass for men most able to judge in the case (even those who have discovered least affection to Religion, or indeed are more than suspected of an aversion from it; whose words therefore may be taken at least for impartial dictates of common sense) that even from such the irresistible force and evidence of the thing hath extorted clear and ample confessions to this purpose; That in nature nothing is performed without reason or design; but every thing in the best manner, and to the best end; beyond what is done in any art; is frequently asserted, and assumed by Aristotle himself as a most evident truth: That in contriving the frame of our bodies (and the same holdeth concerning the bodies of other animals) a wisdom inscrutable; in accomplishing it a power insuperable; in designing to them so much of decency and convenience, a benignity worthy of all veneration are demonstrated; Galen in several places, with language very full and express, yea very earnest and pathetic doth acknowledge; That who doth attently regard a locust, or a caterpillar, or any other viler animal, shall every where therein discover a wonderful art and diligence, is an aphorism dropt even from the gloomy pen of Cardan. That if any man shall view thoroughly all the instruments both of generation and nutrition, and doth not perceive them to have been made, and ordered to their respective offices by some mind (or intelligent agent) he is to be reputed himself void of mind (or out of his wits) is the expression of another person well known among us, whom few do judge partial to this side, or suspicious of bearing a favourable prejudice to Religion. Thus doth common sense from these sort of beings, whereof there be innumerable exposed daily to our observation, even singly considered, deduce the existence of a wisdom, power and goodness unconceivably great; and there are probably divers others (stones, metals, minerals, &c.) no less obvious, even here upon the earth, our place of dwelling,

Arist. de part. An. I. 1. Μᾶλλον
δ' ἐστὶ τὸ ἐν ἐνέκῃ, καὶ τὸ καλὸν ἐν τοῖς ἰ-
φύσεως ἐργοῖς, ἢ ἐν τοῖς ἰ τέχνῃς.
Ἡ φύσις δὲ ποιεῖ καὶ ἐν ἐχθροῖς
τὸ βέλτιστον. Phys. 2. 8.
Ἡ φύσις ἐδὲν ἀλόγως ἐδὲ μάτην
ποιεῖ, de Caelo 2. 11.
Ἐνεκα τοῦ ἀπαντα ὑπάρχει τὰ
φύσει. de Anima 3. 12.

Gal. de placitis Hippoc. & Plat. 1.
7. de usu part. 3. Οἷον ὡς ἐστὶ τῷ
σοφίαν, οἷον ὅ τῷ δύνανται, ὅποιον
ὅ τῷ χρεώσιν, &c.
Card. de variet. 7. 27. pag. 283.

Hobbes de hom. cap. 1.

Itaque ad sensus procedo, satis habens
si hujusmodi res attigero tantum, pleni-
us autem tractandas aliis reliquero, qui
si machinas omnes tum generationis, tum
nutritionis satis perspexerint, nec tamen
eas a mente aliqua conditas, ordinatas-
que ad sua quaque officia viderint, ipsi
profecto sine mente esse censendi sunt.

Νῆ δ' αἰα καὶ τὰς θεὰς ἐν, καὶ γε-
γονότων ἀπὸ καὶ περὶ τὸ αἰδέσθαι καὶ
περὶ τὸ αἰδέσθαι, καὶ ἐν χαλεπῷ.
Epiet. I. 16.

which, were our senses able to discern their constitution and texture, would afford matter of the same acknowledgment.

II. But if passing from such particulars, we observe the relation of several kinds of things, each to other, we shall find more reason to be convinced concerning the same excellent perfections farther extending themselves. By such comparison we may easily discern, that what speaks much of art in it self singly

singly considered, declares more thereof in respect to other things; and that many things, in which, separately looked upon, we could perceive but small artifice, have indeed much of it in such relation; (which although seeming in themselves mean and despicable, are yet very useful and necessary to considerable purposes, in subserviency to the convenience of more noble beings) and though perhaps we cannot thoroughly penetrate the relative use and design of every thing, which hangs up before us in nature's shop (by reason of our incapacity, or unskilfulness in her trade) yet we shall have reason, from what we can plainly discover, to collect, that each piece there is a tool accommodate to some use. Is there not, for instance, a palpable relation between the frame, the temper, the natural inclinations, or instincts of each *animal*, and its element, or natural place and abode; wherein it can only live, finding therein its food, its harbour, its refuge? Is not to each faculty within (or to each sensitive organ) an object without prepared, exactly correspondent thereto; which were it wanting, the faculty would become vain and useless, yea sometime harmful and destructive; as reciprocally the object would import little or nothing, if such a faculty were not provided and fitted thereto? as for example, what would an eye (or the visive power) signify, if there were not light prepared to render things visible thereto; and how much less considerable than it is, would the goodly light it self be, were all things in nature blind, and incapable to discern thereby? what would the ear serve for, if the air were not suitably disposed (made neither too thick, nor too thin; neither too resty, nor too fleeting, but) in a due consistency, and capable of moderate undulations distinguishable thereby? the like we might with the same reason inquire concerning the other senses and faculties, vital or animal, and their respective objects, which we may observe with admirable congruity respecting each other. Have not all those goodly colours, and comely shapes, which in the leaves, the flowers, and the fruits of plants (I might add in gems and precious stones; yea in all sorts of living creatures) we behold, an evident respect to the sight, and the sight a no less visible reference to them? those many kinds of pleasant fragrantcy in herbs, flowers and spices, have they not a like manifest relation to the smell, and it to them? Could all that great variety of wholesome, savoury, and delicious fruits, herbs, grains, pulses, seeds and roots, become so constantly produced, otherwise than for the purpose of feeding and sustaining living creatures, with pleasure and content? is there not a notorious correspondence between them, and the organs of taste, digestion and nutrition? are there not appetites prompting, yea with intolerable pain provoking each living creature to seek its proper sustenance? and doth it not find in the enjoyment hereof a pleasure and satisfaction unexpressible? Let me add: Whence comes it to pass, that ordinarily in nature nothing occurs noisome or troublesome to any sense, but all things wholesome and comfortable, at least innocent or inoffensive? that we may wander all about without being urged to shut our eyes, to stop our ears, our mouths, our noses; but rather invited to open all the avenues of our soul, for admission of the kind entertainments nature sets before us? doth she not every where present spectacles of delight (somewhat of lively picture, somewhat of gay embroidery, somewhat of elegant symmetry) to our eyes, however seldom any thing appears horrid or ugly to them? where is it that we meet with noises so violent, or so jarring, as to offend our ears? is not there rather provided for us, wherever we go, some kind of harmony grateful to them; not only in fields and woods the sweet chirping of birds, by rivers the soft warbling of the streams, but even the rude winds whistle in a tune not unpleasant; the tossing seas yield a kind of solemn and graver melody? All the air about us, is it not (not only not noisome to our smell, but) very comfortable and refreshing? and doth not even the dirty earth yield a wholesome and medicinal scent? So many, so plain, so exactly congruous are the relations of things here about us each to other; which surely could not otherwise come than from one admirable wisdom and power conspiring thus to adapt and connect them

Εἰ χρομαῖα ὁ θεὸς πεποιήκει, δύναμιν δὲ θεατικὴν αὐτῷ μὴ πεποιήκει, τί αὐτῷ ὄφελος; εἰ δὲ οὕτως ἀλλ' ἀνάπαλιν, εἰ τίς μὲν δύναμιν πεποιήκει, τὰ ὄντα δὲ μὴ τοιαῦτα οἷα ὑποπλήσιν τῇ δυνάμει τῇ ὁρατικῇ, καὶ ἔτι τί αὐτῷ ὄφελος; εἰ δὲ οὕτως τίς εἰ καὶ ἀμφοτέρω ταῦτα πεποιήκει, οὕτως δὲ μὴ πεποιήκει; εἰ δὲ ἔτι τί ὄφελος; τίς ἔν' ὁ ἀρμόσας τὸ τοιοῦτον ἐκείνο, καὶ ἐκείνο πρὸς τὸ τοιοῦτον. Epict. l. 6.

together ; as also from an equal goodness, declared in all these things being squared so fitly for mutual benefit and convenience. These considerations are applicable to all (even to the meaner sorts of) animals ; which being the only creatures capable of joy and pleasure, or liable to grief and pain 'twas fit, that insensible things should be disposed to serve their needs and uses ; which hath been with so wonderful a care performed, that of so vast a number among them there is none so vile or contemptible (no worm, no fly, no insect) for whose maintenance, whose defence, whose satisfaction competent (shall I say, or abundant) provision hath not been made, both intrinsecal (by a frame of organs fitting them to obtain and to enjoy what is good for them, to shun and repel what is bad ; by strong appetites inciting them to search after and pursue, or to beware and decline respectively ; by strange instincts inabling them to distinguish between what is fit for them to procure or embrace, to remove or avoid ;) and extrinsecal also, by a great variety of conveniences, answerable to their several desires and needs, dispersed all about, and every where, as it were, offered to them. So that the Holy Psalmist (considering this, and taking upon him to be as it were their Chaplain) had reason to say this grace for them ;

Psal. 145. 15. *The eyes of all wait upon thee, and thou givest them their meat in due season ; thou openest thy hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing.* But especially (that which, as reason enables us, so, due gratitude obliges us, and

Ejus (hominis) causâ videtur cuncta alia genuisse natura. Plin. lib. 7. c. 1.

Ut omnis rerum natura pars tributum aliquod nobis conferret. Sen. de Benef. 4. 5.

Neque enim necessitatibus tantummodò nostris provisum est ; usque in delicias amamur. Ibid.

Ut interdum Pronæa nostra Epicurea esse videtur. Cic. de N. D. 2.

prompts us especially to observe) there is an evident regard (so evident, that even *Pliny*, a professed *Epicurean*, could not forbear acknowledging it) which all things bear to man, the Prince of creatures visible ; they being all as on purpose ordered to yield tribute unto him ; to supply his wants, to gratify his desires ; with profit and pleasure to exercise his faculties ; to content, as it were, even his humour and curiosity. All things about us do minister (or at least may do so, if we would improve the natural instruments, and the opportunities afforded us) to our preserva-

tion, ease or delight. The hidden bowels of the earth yield us treasures of metals and minerals, quarries of stone and coal, so necessary, so serviceable to divers good uses, that we could not commodiously be without them ; the vilest

and most common stones we tread on (even in that we tread on them) are useful, and serve to many good purposes beside : the surface of the earth, how is it bespread all over, as a table well furnished, with variety of delicate fruits, herbs and grains, to nourish our bodies, to please our tastes, to cheer our spirits, to cure our diseases ? how

many fragrant and beautiful flowers offer themselves for the comfort of our smell, and the delight of our sight ? neither can our ears complain, since every wood breeds a quire of natural musicians, ready to entertain them with easy and unaffected harmony. The woods, I say, which also adorned with stately trees afford us a pleasant view, and a refreshing shade, shelter from weather and sun, fuel for our fires, materials for our houses and our shipping ; with divers other needful utensils. Even the barren mountains send us down fresh streams of water, so necessary to the support of our lives, so profitable for the fructification of our grounds, so commodious for conveyance of our wares, and maintaining intercourse among us. Yea the wide seas are not (altogether unprofitable) wastes ; but freely yield us, without our tillage, many rich harvests, transmitting our commerce and traffick, furnishing our tables with stores of dainty fish, supplying the bottles of heaven with waters to refresh the earth, being inexhaustible cisterns, from whence our rivers and fountains are derived : The very rude and boisterous winds themselves fulfil

Psal. 148. 8. *God's word (which once commanded all things to be good and approved them to be so) by yielding manifold services to us ; in brushing and cleansing the air for our health, in driving forward our ships (which without their friendly help could not stir) in gathering together, in scattering, in spreading abroad the clouds ; the clouds, those paths of God, which drop fatness upon our fields and pastures.* As for our living subjects, all the inferiour sorts of

animals,

Vera est Sententia Stoicorum, qui aiunt nostrâ causâ mundum esse constructum. Omnia enim quibus constat, quæque generat ex se mundus, ad utilitatem hominis accommodata sunt. Lact. de Irâ, 13.

Psal. 65. 11,
12, &c.

animals, 'tis hardly possible to reckon the manifold benefits we receive from them; how many ways they supply our needs with pleasant food, and convenient cloathing; how they ease our labour, how they promote even our recreation and sport. Thus have all things upon this earth (as is fit and seemly they should have) by the wise and gracious disposal of the great Creator, a reference to the benefit of its noblest inhabitant, most worthy and most able to use them; many of them have an immediate reference to man (as necessary to his being, or conducive to his well being; being fitted thereto, to his hand, without his care, skill or labour) others a reference to him, more mediate indeed, yet as reasonable to suppose; I mean such things, whose usefulness doth in part depend upon the exercise of our reason, and the instruments subservient thereto: for what is useful by the help of reason, doth as plainly refer to the benefit of a thing naturally endowed with that faculty, as what is agreeable to sense refers to a thing merely sensitive: we may therefore, for instance, as reasonably suppose, that iron was designed for our use, though first we be put to dig for it, then must employ many arts, and much pains, before it become fit for our use; as that the stones were therefore made, which lie open to our view, and which without any preparation we easily apply to the pavement of our streets, or the raising of our fences: Also, the grain we sow in our grounds, or the trees which we plant in our orchards, we have reason to conceive as well provided for us, as those plants, which grow wildly and spontaneously; for that sufficient means are bestowed on us of compassing such ends, and rendering those things useful to us (a reason able to contrive what is necessary in order thereto, and a hand ready to execute) it being also reasonable, that something should be left for the improvement of our reason, and employment of our industry, lest our noblest powers should languish and decay by sloth, or for want of fit exercise. Epiſt. 1. 16.

—Pater ipse
colendi Haud
facilem esse vi-
am voluit, &c.
—Curis acu-
ens mortalia
corda. Virg.

Well then, is it to a fortuitous necessity (or a necessary chance) that we owe all these choice accommodations and preeminences of nature? must we bless and worship fortune for all this? did she so especially love us, and tender our good? was she so indulgent toward us, so provident for us in so many things, in every thing; making us the scope of all her workings and motions here about us? Must we change style, and say, Fortune pours down blessings on our heads, fortune crowns us with loving kindness, fortune daily loads us with her benefits? Shall we not only esteem these good things her gifts, but even acknowledge our selves her offsprings, and reverence her as our mother; disclaiming so noble a parent, as wisdom omnipotent; disowning so worthy a benefactor, as sovereign goodness? O brutish degeneracy; O hellish depravedness of mind! Are we not, not only wretchedly blind and stupid, if we are not able to discern so clear beams of wisdom shining through so many perspicuous correspondences, if we cannot trace the divine power by footsteps so express and remarkable, if we cannot read so legible characters of transcendent goodness; but extremely unworthy and ingrateful, if we are not ready to acknowledge, and with hearty thankfulness to celebrate all these excellent perfections, by which all these things have been so ordered, as to conspire and co-operate for our benefit? Methinks the very perception of so much good, the continual enjoyment of so many accommodations, the frequent satisfaction of so many senses and appetites, should put us in so good humour, that when we feel our hearts replenished with food and gladness, when we so delightfully relish nature's dainties, when we with pleasure view this fair scene of things, when our ears are ravished with harmonious sounds, when our spirits are exhilarated with those natural perfumes shed about our gardens, our woods, and our fields, we should not be able to forbear devoutly crying out with the Psalmist; O Lord, how manifold are thy works, in wisdom hast thou made them all, the earth is full of thy riches. The earth, O Lord, is full of thy mercy and bounty: Lord, what is man, that thou art so mindful of him; or the son of man, that thou makest such account of him? that Thou hast made him to have dominion over the works of thy hands, and hast put all things under his feet? Under his feet; and such in a manner, according to proper and direct meaning, are all those things which we have as yet touched upon; so many arguments of the Divinity, even looking downwards, as it were,

οὐχ' εαυτὸν
ἀμαρτυροῦν
ἀφ' ἡμεῶν, ἀλλὰ
δοξαίωσιν, &c.
Acts 14. 17.

Acts 14. 17.

Psal. 104. 24.
—119. 64.
—33. 5.

Psal. 8. 4.

—144. 3.

were, (if we do not so look rather like beasts than men) we may upon this little spot of our habitation perceive: But if, employing our peculiar advantage, we lift up our eyes and minds towards heaven, there in a larger volume, and in a brighter character, we shall behold the testimonies of perfection, and majesty stupendious, described: As our eyes are dazzled with the radiant light coming thence, so must the vast amplitude, the stately beauty, the decent order, the steady course, the beneficial efficacy of those glorious lamps, astonish our minds, fixing their attention upon them: He that shall, I say, consider with what precise regularity, and what perfect constancy those (beyond our imagination) vast bodies perform their rapid motions, what pleasure, comfort and advantage their light and heat do yield us, how their kindly influences conduce to the general preservation of all things here below (impregnating the womb of this cold and dull lump of earth with various sorts of life, with strange degrees of activity) how necessary (or how convenient at least) the certain recourses of seasons made by them are; how can we but wonder, and wondering adore that transcendancy of beneficent wisdom and power, which first disposed them into, which still preserves them in such a state and order?

Ordo autem siderum, Et in omni aternitate constantia neque naturam significat, est enim plena rationis, neque fortunam, qua amica varietati constantiam respuit. Cic. de Nat. D. 2. p. 68.

Οὐδέποτε ἐν ἐν χειμῶνι μακρὰ γέγονεν ἢ ἡμέρας, ὥσπερ εἰδέσθαι ἐν θερί μακρὰ γέγονεν ἢ νύξ, τοσούτων παρελθουσῶν γενεῶν· ἀλλὰ ἐν τοσούτῳ διασημῶν καὶ μήκει, εἰδὲ ἀκαταλόγῳ, ἐχ' ἡμῶμεν, ἐρίπῳ ὀφθαλμῷ ἢ ἐτέρῃ τὴν ἐτίεον ἐπλεονέκησο. Chryl. Ἀνδρ. 3'.

* Αἱ τε γὰρ ἡλιος καὶ σελήνη, καὶ τὰ λοιπὰ τῶν ἀστρον τῶν ἀπογείων φορῶν ἐπεχθόντα, ὅμοια μὲν ἀνατέλλει τοῖς χρώμασιν, ἴσα δὲ τοῖς μεγέθεσι, καὶ κατὰ τόπους, καὶ κατὰ χρόνους τὰς αὐτὰς. Plut. de plac. 1. 6.

to them what the inspired Psalmist sings concerning the heavenly host; that God commanded, and they were created; he hath also stablished them for ever and ever, by a decree that shall not pass. And surely, those celestial squadrons could never be rang'd in a form so proper, and march on so regularly without the marshalling, and without the conduct of a most skilful captain. He that can seriously ascribe all this to an undisciplined and unconducted troop of atoms rambling up and down confusedly through the field of infinite space; what might he not as easily assert, or admit? certainly, he that can think so, can think any thing; and labour were vainly spent in farther endeavour to convince him: So even Pagan Philosophers have judged, upon whom what im-

pression this consideration hath made, we may learn from these words of one among them, Cicero: Who (saith he) would call him a man, that beholding such certain motions of heaven, thus settled ranks of stars, all things there so connected and suited together, should deny there were a reason in them, or should affirm these things were done by chance, which by no understanding we can reach with how great counsel they are performed? And, what other thing (adds he) can be so open and so perspicuous, to us that shall behold the heavens, and contemplate things celestial, as that there is a most excellent Divinity, by which these things are governed? Thus do the heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handy work; yea thus have we reason to acknowledge with Nehemiah, † Thou, even thou, art the Lord alone; thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, which

Quia hunc hominem dixerit, qui cum tam certos cæli motus, tam ratos astrorum ordines, tamque inter se connexa, Et apta viderit, negat his ullam inesse rationem, eaque casu fieri dicat, que quanto consilio gerantur, nullo consilio assequi possumus. Cic. de Nat. D. 2. pag. 90.

Quid potest esse tam apertum, tamque perspicuum, cum cælum suspeximus, celestiaque contemplati sumus, quam aliquod esse numen præstantissimæ mentis, qua hæc regantur. Ibid. p. 53.

Τὶς ἐν ἑτῶς ἀδλιῶν καὶ ταλαίπωρος, ὡς ὁρῶν μὲν ἑρῶν, ὁρῶν δὲ θαλάσσιαν καὶ γῆν, ὁρῶν δὲ τοσαύτῳ ὅλῳ ἐνκερσίαν ἑτῶς ἀκατέστη, καὶ ἡμέρας καὶ νυκτὸς ἀδιάπτωτον τάξιν, νομίζεν αὐτομάτως ταῦτα γίνεσθαι, ἀλλὰ μὴ προσηκόντων ἢ ἀπαντὰ ταῦτα κατὰ σοφίας καὶ προσηκόντως διατάσσασθαι. Chryl. Ἀνδρ. 3'.

* Psal. 19. 1. † Neh. 9. 6. Isa. 37. 16.

all these hosts; the earth and all things that are therein, the seas and all that is therein, and thou preservest them all. Thus every thing above and below us, before and behind, on this, on that, on every side of us, yields more than a simple attestation to the existence of its glorious maker; each of them singly, several of them together giving their vote and suffrage thereto.

Quocunque te flexeris, ibi Deum videbis occurrentem tibi, &c. Sen. de Benef. 4. 8.

III: Yea, which was the last consideration intimated, All of them join together in one universal concert, with one harmonious voice, to proclaim one and the same wisdom to have designed, one and the same power to have produced, one and the same goodness to have set both wisdom and power on work in designing, and in producing their being, in preserving and governing it: for this whole System of things, what is it, but one goodly body (as it were) compacted of several members and organs, so aptly compacted together, that each confers its being, and its operation, to the grace and ornament, to the strength and stability of the whole; One soul (of divine providence) enlivening in a manner, and actuating it all? Survey it all over, and we shall have reason to say with the Philosopher, *All the parts of the world are so constituted, that they could not be either better for use, nor more beautiful for shew.* In it we shall espy nothing in substance superfluous, or defective; nothing in shape deformed, in position misplaced, in motion exorbitant, so as to prejudice the beauty or welfare of the whole. We may perhaps not discern the use of each part, or the tendency of each particular effect; but of many they are so plain and palpable, that reason obliges us to suppose the like of the rest. Even as a person whom we observe frequently to act with great consideration and prudence, when at other times we cannot penetrate the drift of his proceedings, we must yet imagine that he hath some latent reason, some reach of policy, that we are not aware of: Or, as in an engine consisting of many parts, curiously combined, whereof we do perceive the general use, and apprehend how divers parts thereof conduce thereto, reason prompts us (although we neither see them all, nor can comprehend the immediate serviceableness of some) to think they are all in some way or other subservient to the Artist's design; such an agent is God, the wisdom of whose proceedings being in so many instances notorious, we ought to suppose it answerable in the rest; such an engine is this World, of which we may easily enough discern the general end, and how many of its parts do conduce thereto; and cannot therefore in reason but suppose the rest in their kind alike congruous, and conducive to the same purpose: Our incapacity to discover all doth not argue any defect, but an excess of wisdom in the design thereof; not too little perfection in the work, but too great an one rather in respect to our capacity: however we plainly see the result of all to be the durable continuance of things, without interruption, or change, in the same constant uniform state; which shews, that in the world there is no seed of corruption (as it were) no inclination to dissolution or decay, nothing that tends to the discomposure or destruction of the whole: Each ingredient thereof (of those so unconceivably numerous) consists within its proper limits; not encroaching immoderately upon, nor devouring or disturbing another in its course; contrary qualities therein serving to a due temperament, opposite inclinations begetting a just poise; particular vicissitudes conferring to a general settlement; private Deaths and corruptions maintaining the publick life and health, producing a kind of youthful vigour in the whole: So that six thousand years together hath this great Machine stood, always one and the same, unimpaired in its beauty, unworn in its parts, unwearied and undisturbed in its motions.

—ἐποίησεν ὡς ἀγαθὸς τὸ χρησιμὸν, ὡς σοφὸς τὸ κάλλιστον, ὡς δυνατὸς τὸ μέγιστον. Bal. Hexaem. l. a.

Omnes mundi partes ita constitutae sunt, ut neque ad usum meliores potuerint esse, nec ad speciem pulchriores. Cic. de Nat. Deor. 2. pag. 85.

Μὴδὲν ἢ φύσις ποιεῖ μάτρω, μὴδὲ ἀπολείπει τῆς ἀναγκαίου. Arist. 3. de Anima, cap. 10.

Ῥύσεις, καὶ ἀλλοιώσεις ἀναρᾶσι τὸν κόσμον διωκεῖς. Anton. 6. 15. 12. 13.

Αἱ μὲν γένεσις ἐπανασέλλουσι τὰς φθοράς, αἱ δὲ φθοραὶ καὶ ἀφαιροῦσι τὰς γενέσεις· μία δ' ἐν πάντων περιαινομένων σωτηρία διατελεῖ. Aug. de Mund. cap. 5.

Omnia pereundo servantur; omnia de interitu reformantur, &c. Tertull. Apol. cap. 48.

Ὁ μέγας καὶ θαυμαστός καὶ μεγαλειότητι αὐτῶν κηρύξ. Greg. Naz. Or. 43.

—Ἐκαστον μὲν καθάπερ τινὶ χαλνῶ καὶ δεσμῶ τῶ βελήματι τῶ ποιήσαντι τὸς οἰκίους διαφυλάττον δυνεῖ, καὶ ἡ μάχη τῶτων εἰρήνης αἰτία γίνεται τοῦ παντί. Chrys. Orat. 47, 48. Tom. 6.

Οὐδ' ἐν τοῖς καλοῖς εἰκὴ καὶ ὡς ἔτυχ' εἴνεται, ἀλλὰ μετὰ τινος τέχνης δημιουργίας. Plut. de plac. 1. 6.

Quod si mundum efficere potest concursus atomorum, cur porticum, cur templum, cur domum, cur urbem non potest, qua sunt multo minus operosa, Et multo quidem faciliora? Cic. 2. de Natur. Deor. pag. 89.

Κόσμος καλὸν ποικίλμα τέκτορος σοφῆς. Eurip.

Cic. 2. de Nat. Deor. pag. 89.
Ἐπεὶ οὐκ ἔστιν ἔργον τοῦ Θεοῦ.
Pind.

which Saying we cannot better render or express, than in St. Paul's words, Rom. 1: 20. *The invisible things of God by the making (or rather by the make and constitution) of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that, I adjoin after him, they are inexcusable, who from hence do not know God; or knowing him, do not render unto him his due glory and service.*

If then (as Plutarch says) *no fair thing is ever produced by hazard, but with art framing it*; how could this most fair comprehension of all fair things be not the lawful issue of art, but a by-blow of fortune; of fortune, the mother only of broods monstrous and mishapen. If the nature of any cause be discoverable by its effects; if from any work we may infer the workman's ability; if in any case the results of wisdom are distinguishable from the consequences of chance, we have reason to believe, that the Architect of this magnificent and beautiful frame was one incomprehensibly wise, powerful and good Being; and to conclude with Cicero, *Esse præstantem aliquam æternamque naturam, & eam suspiciendam adorandamque hominum generi, pulchritudo mundi, ordoque rerum cælestium cogit confiteri*; the sense of

I Believe in God.

SERMON VII.

THE BEING of GOD Proved from the FRAME of HUMANE NATURE.

GEN. 1. 27.

So God created Man in his own Image, in the Image of God created he him.

THE belief of God's existence is the foundation of all Religion, if which be not well laid in our minds by convincing reasons, the superstructures standing thereon may easily be in danger of being shaken and ruined; especially being assailed by the winds of temptation and opposition, which every where blow so violently in this irreligious age. No discourses therefore can perhaps be more needful (or seasonably useful) than such as do produce and urge reasons of that kind, apt to establish that foundation. Of such there be, I conceive, none better, or more suitable to common capacity, than those, which are drawn from effects apparent to mens general observation and experience, the which cannot reasonably be ascribed to any other cause, than unto God, that is (according to the notion commonly answering to that name) to a Being incomprehensibly wise, powerful and good. Of such effects there be innumerable many in this sensible world among things natural, more strictly so called, that is, subsisting and acting without immediate use of understanding or choice; the constitutions and operations of which (being evidently directed according to very much reason, and to very good purpose) do evince their being framed and ordered by such a Being; as I have formerly, with a competent largeness, endeavoured to shew. But beside those, there is exposed to our observation, yea subject to our inward conscience, another sort of beings, acting in another manner, and from other principles; having in them a spring of voluntary motion and activity; not, as the rest, necessarily determined, or driven on, by a kind of blind violence, in one direct road to one certain end; but guiding themselves with judgment and choice by several ways toward divers ends; briefly, endued with reason to know what and why, and with liberty

Rom. p. 20.

berty to chuse what and how they should act; And that this sort of beings (that is, we our selves, all mankind) did proceed from the same source, or original cause, as it is in way of history delivered and affirmed in our Text, so I shall now endeavour by reason (apt to perswade even those, who would not allow this sacred authority) to shew. Indeed, if the *eternal power, and divinity of God may* (as St. Paul tells us) *be seen in all the works of God*; the same peculiarly and principally will appear observable in this master-piece as it were of the great Artificer; if the meanest creatures reflect somewhat of light, by which we may discern the divine existence and perfections; in this fine and best polished mirror, we shall more clearly discover the same; no where so much of God will appear as in this work, which was designedly formed to resemble and represent him. This then is the subject of our present discourse, That in man well considered we may discern manifest footsteps of that incomprehensibly excellent Being impressed upon him; and this doubly, both in each man singly taken, and in men as standing in conjunction or relation to each other: considering man's nature, we shall have reason to think it to have proceeded from God; considering humane societies, we shall see cause to suppose them designed and governed by God.

I. Consider we first any one single man, or that humane nature abstractedly, whereof each individual person doth partake; and whereas that doth consist of two parts, one material and external, whereby man becomes a sensible part of nature, and hath an eminent station among visible creatures; the other, that interior and invisible principle of operations peculiarly called humane: As to the former, we did, among other such parts of nature, take cognizance thereof; and even in that discovered plain marks of a great wisdom that made it, of a great goodness taking care to maintain it. The other now we shall chiefly consider, in which we may discern not only *σημεία*, but *δemonstration* of the divine existence and efficiency; not only large tracks, but express footsteps; not only such signs as smoke is of fire, or a picture of the painter that drew it; but even such, as the spark is of fire, and the picture of its original.

1. And first, that man's nature did proceed from some efficient cause, it will (as of other things in nature) be reasonable to suppose. For if not so, then it must either spring up of it self, so that at some determinate beginning of time, or from all eternity, some one man, or some number of men, did of themselves exist; or there hath been a succession, without beginning, of continual generations indeterminate (not terminated in any root, one or more of singular persons.)

Now generally that man did not at any time in any manner spring up of himself, appears, 1. from history and common tradition; which (as we shall elsewhere largely shew) deliver the contrary: being therein more credible than bare conjecture or precarious assertion, destitute of testimony or proof. 2. From the present constant manner of man's production, which is not by spontaneous emergency, but in way of successive derivation, according to a method admirably provided for by nature. 3. Because if ever man did spring up of himself, it should be reasonable that at any time, that often, that at least sometime in so long a course of times the like should happen, which yet no experience doth attest. 4. There is an evident relation between our bodies and souls; the members and organs of our bodies being wonderfully adapted to serve the operations of our souls. Now in our bodies (as we have before shewed) there appear plain arguments of a most wise Author, that contrived and framed them; therefore in no likelihood did our souls arise of themselves, but owe their being to the same wise cause.

Also particularly, that not any men did at some beginning of time spring up of themselves, is evident, because there is even in the thing it self a repugnance; and it is altogether unconceivable, that any thing, which once hath not been, should ever come to be without receiving its being from another: and supposing such a rise of any thing, there could not in any case be any need of an efficient cause; since any thing might purely out of nothing come to be of it self.

Neither

Neither could any man so exist from eternity, both from the general reasons assigned, which being grounded in the nature of the thing, and including no respect to this circumstance of now and then, do equally remove this supposition (for what is in it self unapt, or unnecessary, or improbable to be now, was always alike so; the being from eternity, or in time not altering the nature of the thing) and also particularly, because there are no footsteps, or monuments of man's (not to say eternal but even) ancient standing in the world; but rather many good arguments (otherwhere touched) of his late coming thereinto; which consideration did even convince *Epicurus* and his Followers, and made them acknowledge man to be a novel production. I add, seeing it is necessary to suppose some eternal and self-subsistent Being distinct from man, and from any other particular sensible being (for there is no such being, which in reason can be supposed author of the rest; but rather all of them bear characters signifying their original from a Being more excellent than themselves) and such an one being admitted, there is no need or reason to suppose any other; (especially Man and all others appearing unapt so to subsist) therefore it is not reasonable to ascribe eternal self-subsistence to Man. This discourse I confirm with the suffrage of *Aristotle* himself; who in his *Physicks* hath these words:

In natural things that which is definite, and better, if possible, must rather exist: but it suffices, that one, the first of things immovable, being eternal, should be to others the original of motion; (I subjoin and, by parity of reason, it is sufficient that one and the best thing be eternally subsistent of it self; and the cause of subsistence to the rest.)

Ἐν δὲ τοῖς φύσει δὲ τὸ πεπερασμένον, καὶ τὸ βέλτιστον, εἰν ἐνδέχεται, ὥστε ἀρχὴν μᾶλλον ἰκανὴν ὅτι εἰ ἐν, τὸ πρῶτον ἢ ἀκίνητων, αἰδίων ὄν, ἔσαι τοῖς ἄλλοις ἀρχὴ κινήσεως. *Phys.* 8. 7.

As for the last supposition, that there have been indeterminate successions of men, without beginning, it is also liable to most of the former exceptions; beside that it is altogether unintelligible, and its having this peculiar difficulty in it, that it ascribes determinate effects to causes indeterminate. And indeed it hath been to no other purpose introduced, than to evade the arguments arising from the nature of the thing, by confounding the matter with impertinent intrigues, such as the terms of infinite and indeterminate must necessarily produce in man's shallow understanding. I therefore upon such grounds assume it as a reasonable supposition, that man's nature is no wise * *ἀνθρώπος*; but hath proceeded from some cause.

(* hath not sprung up of it self.)

2. I adjoin *secondly*, that it could not come from any sensible or material cause, nor from any complication of such causes; for that the properties, the powers, the operations of man's soul are wholly different from in kind, highly elevated in worth above all the properties, powers and operations of things corporeal, in what imaginable manner soever framed or tempered: the properties, faculties and operations of our souls are, or refer to several sorts or ways of knowledge (sense, fancy, memory, discourse, mental intuition) of willing (that is of appetite toward and choice of good, or of disliking and refusing evil) of passion (that is of sensible complacency or displeasure in respect to good and evil apprehended under several notions and circumstances) of *αὐτοκίνητος*, or self-moving (the power and act of moving without any force extrinsecal working upon it.) The general properties of things corporeal are extension according to several dimensions and figures; aptness to receive motion from, or to impart motion unto each other in several degrees and proportions of velocity; to divide, and unite; or to be divided, and united each by other; and the like coherent with and resulting from those: now to common sense it seems evident, that those properties, and these are *totò genere* different from each other; nor have any conceivable similitude unto, connexion with, dependence upon each other, as to their immediate nature. Let any part of this corporeal mass be refined by the subtlest division, let it be agitated by the quickest motion, let it be modell'd into what shape or fashion you please, how can any man imagine either knowledge, or appetite, or passion thence to result? or that it should thence acquire a power of moving it self, or another adjacent body? Even, I say, this inferior locomotive faculty is too high for matter by any change it can undergo.

dergo to obtain: for we (as inward experience, or conscience of what we do may teach us) determine our selves commonly to action, and move the corporeal instruments subject to our will and command, not by force of any precedent bodily impressi^on or impulse, but either according to mere pleasure, or in virtue of somewhat spiritual and abstracted from matter, acting upon us, not by a physical energy, but by moral representation, in a manner more easily conceived than expressed; (for no man surely is so dull, that he cannot perceive a huge difference between being dragg'd by a violent hand, and drawn to action by a strong reason; although it may puzzle him to express that difference) such a proposition of truth, such an apprehension of events possible, such an appearance of good or evil consequent (things nowhere existent without us, nor having in them any thing of corporeal subsistence; nor therefore capable of corporeal operation) are all the engines that usually impel us to action; and these by a voluntary application of our minds (by collecting and digesting, severing and rejecting, fitting and moulding the present single representations of things, by an immediate interior power, independent from any thing without us) we frame within our selves. And even such self-moving, or self-determining power we cannot any wise conceive to be in, or to arise from any part of this corporeal mass, however shaped or sized, however situated or agitated: much less can we well apprehend the more noble faculties to be seated in, or to spring from it; of them the grossest and the finest, the slowest and the nimblest, the roughest and the smoothest bodies are alike capable, or rather alike incapable. To think a gross body may be ground and pounded into rationality, a slow body may be thumpt and driven into passion, a rough body may be filed and polished into a faculty of discerning and resenting things; that a cluster of pretty thin round atoms (as *Democritus* forsooth conceited) that a well mixt combination of elements (as *Empedocles* fancied) that a harmonious contemperation (or *crasis*) of humours (as *Galen*, dreaming it seems upon his drugs and his potions, would persuade us) that an implement made up of I know not what fine springs, and wheels, and such mechanick knacks (as some of our modern wizards have been busie in divining) should without more to do become the subject of so rare capacities and endowments, the author of actions so worthy, and works so wonderful; capable of wisdom and vertue, of knowledge so vast, and of desires so lofty; apt to contemplate truth, and affect good; able to recollect things past, and to foresee things future; to search so deep into the causes of things, and disclose so many mysteries of nature; to invent so many arts and sciences, to contrive such projects of policy, and atchieve such feats of prowess; briefly should become capable to design, undertake and perform all those admirable effects of humane wit and industry which we daily see and hear; how senseless and absurd conceits are these; how can we, without great indignation and regret entertain such suppositions? No, no; 'tis both ridiculous fondness, and monstrous baseness for us to own any parentage from, or any alliance to things so mean, so very much below us. 'Tis indeed observable, that no man can well, or scarce any man hath disowned the receiving his being from God, but hath also in a manner disavowed his own being what he is; that no man denying God, hath not also withal denied himself; denied himself to be a man; renounced his reason, his liberty, and other perfections of his nature; rather than acknowledge himself so well descended, hath been ready to confess himself no more than a beast, yea much less than probably beasts are; a mere corporeal machine, a ball of fate and chance, a thing violently tost and tumbled up and down by bodies all about it. But let these degenerate men vilifie their own nature, and disparage themselves as they please, yet those noble perfections of our souls speak its extraction from a higher stock; we cannot if we consider them well, but acknowledge that,

Arist. de An.
t. 2.

Mentem è cœlesti demissam traximus arce;

or as Epipharmus said of old, that *man's reason did sprout from the divine reason*; they plainly discover their original to be from a cause it self understanding and knowing, willing freely, resenting things (if I may so speak) and moving of it self in a more excellent manner and degree.

And indeed it is very considerable to our purpose, that while we assert the existence of God, we assert no other thing to be, than such as whereof we can assign a manifest instance or example (as it were) although in degree much inferiour; for what can in any degree exist, 'tis not hard to conceive that possible to exist in any degree, how high soever; what is in kind possible, is in any perfection of degree possible; yea what we see in a lower degree somewhere to exist, doth probably otherwhere exist in higher perfection. There is therefore scarce any attribute commonly ascribed to God, the existence whereof we cannot shew possible, yea very credible, by shewing some degree (I use this word in a large and popular sense, not regarding Scholastical nicety) some participation, some semblance (or if you please, some shadow) thereof discernible in man; he being indeed a small picture, as it were, wherein God hath drawn and represented himself, giving us to read that of himself in this small volume, which in its proper character and size we could never be able to apprehend; each letter, each line of his excellency being in it self too large for our eye perfectly to view and comprehend.

3. We are (I say) not only God's works, but his children; our souls bearing in their countenance and complexion divers express features of him; especially as at first they were made, and as by improvement of our capacities they may again become. In the substance of man's soul, in its union with things corporeal, in its properties and powers we may observe divers such resemblances, declaring it in a manner to be what *Seneca* did say of it, *a little God harboured in humane body*. For as God (*inhabiting light inaccessible*) being himself invisible, and subject to no sense, discovers himself by manifold effects of wisdom and power, so doth our soul, it self immediately exposed to no sense, shew it self by many works of art and industry, wherein she imitates nature, and the works of God; although her works in fineness and greatness do indeed come infinitely short of his.

As God by his presence and influence doth (as the Philosopher speaks). *contain, and keep together the whole frame of things*; so that he withdrawing them, it would fall of it self into corruption and ruine; So doth the soul by its union and secret energy upon the body connect the parts of its body, and preserve it from dissolution, which presently, they being removed, do follow.

As he in a manner beyond our conception, without any proper extension, or composition of parts doth co-exist with; penetrateth, and passeth through all things; * So is she, in a manner also unconceivable, every where present within her bounds, and penetrates all the dimensions of her little world.

As He incomprehensibly by a word of his mind, or by a mere act of will doth move the whole frame or any part of nature; so doth she, we cannot tell how, by thinking only, and by willing weild her body, and determine any member thereof to motion.

As He, not confined by the extension or duration of things, doth at one simple view behold all things, not only present, but past and future; yea whenever, wherever, however possible; So doth she making wide excursions out of her narrow mansion in an instant, as it were, or with a marvellous agility transcend any fixed bounds

— quid mirum noscere mundum
Si possunt homines, quibus est & mundus in ipsis,
Exemplumque Dei quisque est in imagine parva? Manil. 4.

Trismeg. χ'. Δὲ τοῦ καὶ τοῦ ὄντος, ὃ μὴ ἀνθρώπου ἐπιγίγνεται, εἶναι δὲ δυνάτον, ὃ ὅτι ἐγγίγνεται εἶναι δὲ δυνάτον, ἀνθρώπου ἀνθρώπου.
Deus in humano corpore hospitans.

Quem in hoc mundo locum Deus obtinet, hunc in homine animus; quod est illuc materia, id in nobis corpus est. Sen. Ep. 65.

Deum te scito esse: siquidem Deus est, qui viget, qui sentit, qui meminit, qui providet, qui tam regit, & movet, & moderatur id corpus, cui prepositus est, quam hunc mundum princeps ille Deus; & ut ipsum mundum ex quadam parte mortalem Deus aternus, sic fragile corpus animus sempiternus movet. Cic. in Somn. Scip.

Περίεχει πᾶσαν φύσιν. Arist. de mundo.

Δοκεῖ ἡ ψυχὴ τὸ σῶμα συνέχειν ἐξελθούσης ἐν διαπνέειν καὶ σήπεται. Arist. de An. 1. 9.

* Ἡ δὲ ψυχὴ τοῖς ὁμοιωματικῶς πάσῃ κατ' ἐξουσίαν ἐφαπλάττει τῇ κλίσει, καὶ μέγας ἐρεθισμὸν ἀνίστα, καὶ τῇ ἀβύσσῳ ἐπιβαλεῖται, καὶ τὴν πλάττει τὴν οἰκονομίαν ἐπερχομένη, &c. Gr. Nyff. Cat. c. 10.

Magna & generosa res est humanus animus, in immensum se extendit, nec ullos sibi poni nisi communes cum Deo terminos patitur. Sen. Ep. 102.

Πῶς μετῇ τόπῳ, καὶ νῆς ἐ χωρίζεται, ἀλλ' ἐν ταυτῇ μόνῳ πάντα ἐπέχεται; Greg. Naz. Or. 26.

of time or place; surveys in her thought the most remote regions, stopping no where, and passing over the world's bounds into spaces void and imaginary; reviews ages long since past, and looks forward into those long after to come; sees things in their causes, and as it were beyond them, even the possibilities of things that never shall be.

Ὁ θεὸς ἐδὲν
μάτῳ ποιεῖ.
Arist.

As He performs nothing rashly or vainly, but always with wisest design to the best end; so doth she never set her self on action without some drift, or aim at good apparent to her.

Τὰς αὐτῆς λογικῆς καὶ ἀλόγου κινήσεως
ἀνθρώπων, ζῶν λογικὴν συνέχευται,
καὶ συνέδρασε μουσικῶς τε καὶ ἀρρήτως
τὸ ἔν τῷ νοῷ, καὶ τὸ ἐν τῷ πνεύματι.
Greg. Naz. Or. 26.

Ἐν ᾧ ἀδυνάτων ὑπάρχειν αὐτῇ
κίνησιν. de An. 1. 3. ἀπαθείας, de An.
1. 5. 3. 5, 6, &c. ἀμυγῆς ἀπλῆς. 3.
6, &c.

As He among all the agitations and changes of things without him abides himself immovable, impassible and immutable; so is she, immediately at least, not disturbed, not altered, not affected by the various motions that surround her; they do not touch her; they cannot stir her; among the many tumults and tempests blustering all about her she can retain a steady calm and rest; (*Aristotle* himself concluded her to be unmoveable, impassible, unmixed and uncompounded.) So fair characters are there of the divine nature engraven upon man's soul; but one chief

property thereof we have not as yet touched; whereof (alas!) the lineaments are more faint and less discernible; they being in themselves originally most tender and delicate, and thence apt by our unhappy degeneration to suffer the most, and have thence accordingly been most defaced; Goodness I mean; whereof yet, I shall not doubt to say, many goodly reliques are extant, and may be observed therein. There do remain dispersed in the soil of humane nature divers seeds of goodness, of benignity, of ingenuity, which being cherished, excited and quickened by good culture do, to common experience, thrust out flowers very lovely, yield fruits very pleasant of virtue and goodness. We see that even the generality of men are prone to approve

*Quæ autem natio non comitatem, non
benignitatem, non gratum animum, &
beneficii memorem diligit? quæ super-
bos, quæ maleficos, quæ crudeles, quæ
ingratos non aspernatur, non odit?*
Cic. de Leg. 1. pag. 305.

like, who are so addicted to themselves, as to be backward to do good to others. Yea no man can act according to those rules of justice and goodness without satisfaction of mind; no man can do against them with-

Rom. 2. 15. out inward self-condemnation and regret (as *St. Paul* did observe for

*Quid tam laudabile, quid tam aqua-
liter in omnium animos receptum, quàm
referre bene meritis gratiam? Sen. de
Benef. 4. 16.*

*Huic upi rei non posuimus legem,
tāquam satis natura cōvisset. Ibid.
4. 17.*

us.) No man hardly is so savage, in whom the receiving kindnesses doth not beget a kindly sense, and an inclination (*eo nomine*, for that cause barely) to return the like; which inclination cannot well be ascribed to any other principle than somewhat of ingenuity innate to man.

All men (I suppose) feel in themselves (if at least not harden'd by villainous custom) a disposition prompting them to commiserate, yea (even with some trouble, and some damage to themselves) to succour and relieve them who are in want, pain, or any distress; even mere strangers and such from whom they can expect no return of benefit or advantage to themselves.

Many examples occur in experience and in history of men, who from dictates of common reason, and natural inclinations (which in this case are not to be separated, both arising from the same source of humane nature) have been very apt freely and liberally to impart unto others somewhat of any good thing they possessed; to sacrifice their own ease, pleasure, profit unto others benefit; to undergo great pains and hazards for publick good (the good of their family, of their friends, of their countrey, of mankind in general) and all this without any hope of recompence; except perhaps that commonly they might have some regard to the approbation and acceptance, to the good will and gratitude of them, whom their beneficence obliged; which in real esteem is no great derogation to their noble performances; and

*Vicit amor pa-
triae, laudum-
que cupido.*

and argues only there is together with such a laudable benignity or goodness of nature (to excite and enliven it) implanted a natural ambition also, or generosity in man's soul; which being well moderated, seems not culpable; since God himself, in return to his most free beneficence, doth expect and require somewhat of thanks and praise, so much as we are able to render to him.

Yea (although our adversaries will scarce admit so much, for that not supposing any good original, they are unwilling to allow any good derivative; they are as ready to exclude all humanity as divinity; they have commonly, as no opinion of God, so no good opinion of men; feeling little good in themselves, they are willing to think less to be in others; so projecting to excuse themselves, and shrowd their own particular faults under the covert of a general naughtiness) I doubt not to say, there have been many persons in all ages full of very single and sincere good-will toward men, heartily desiring the publick good, and compassionating the evils of mankind; ready with their best endeavours to procure and promote the one, to prevent and remove the other, from principles of mere ingenuity or pure nobleness; that with unmovable resolution have persisted in courses tending to such ends, although in them they have encountered dangers, disgraces and troubles from the ingrateful world, or rather from some men prevalent therein, their envy or spite.

In fine, the wisest observers of man's nature have pronounced him to be a creature gentle and sociable, inclinable to and fit for conversation, apt to keep good order, to observe rules of justice, to embrace any sort of virtue, if well managed; if instructed by good discipline, if guided by good example, if living under the influence of wise laws and vertuous governours.

Fierceness, rudeness, craft, malice, all perverse and intractable, all mischievous and vicious dispositions to grow among men (like weeds in any, even the best soil) and overspread the earth from neglect of good education; from ill conduct, ill custom, ill example; ('tis the comparifon of St. Chrysostom, and of Plutarch.)

'Tis favour therefore, I conceive, to their own habitual depravations of nature (or perhaps to some prejudicate opinions) which hath induced some men to make so disadvantageous a portraiture of humane nature, in which nothing lightsome or handsome, no lines of candour or rectitude do appear, but all seems black and crooked; all is drawn over with dusky shades,

and irregular features of base designfulness, and malicious cunning; of suspicion, malignity, rapacity; which character, were it true (in that general extent, and not proper only to some monsters among men) we need not farther seek for hell, since as many men, so many fiends appear unto us. But so commodious living here, so many offices daily performed among men, of courtesie, mercy and pity; so many constant observances of friendship and amity, so many instances of fidelity and gratitude, so much credit always (even among Pagans and Barbarians) preserved to justice and humanity, (humanity, that very name doth fairly argue for us) do sufficiently confute those defamers and slanderers of mankind; do competently evidence, that all good inclinations are not quite banished the world, not quite razed out of man's soul; but that even herein humane nature doth somewhat resemble its excellent original, the nature divine.

Thus doth man's nature in its substance, as it were, its faculties, its manner of operation, resemble God; but we may farther observe, that as children are indeed in complexion and feature usually born somewhat like to their parents, but grow daily more like unto them; (those smaller lineaments continually with their bulk and stature increasing and becoming more discernible) so is man improvable to more exact resemblance of God; his soul hath appetites and capacities, by which well guided and ordered it soars and climbs continually in its affection and desire toward divine perfection. Man hath an insatiable curiosity and greediness of knowledge (*his eye is never satisfied with see-* Ecclef. i. 8.

Nec est quisquam gentis ullius, qui ducem naturam nactus ad virtutem pervenire non possit. Cic. de Leg. 1.

Natura nos ad mentem optimam genuit, adeoque discere meliora volentibus promptum est, ut verè inveniuntur sit illud magis malos esse tam multos. Quintil. 12. 11.

Chrysost. Tom. 5. pag. 613. Καὶ ἅπας ἡ γῆ, ὅταν λιπαρὰ καὶ πῶλον εἶσα τυγχάνῃ, μὴ γεωργηθῇ, πολλὰ ἐπιδεδεικνύται καὶ ἀκαρπῶν τῶν φασγν, ἔτω δὲ καὶ ἡ φύσις ἡ ἡμετέρα καλὴ εἶσα διὰ τὸ γεωργαγάντα, καὶ φασγν τὸ ἀρετῆς καρπὸν ἐπιτηδεύειν ἔχουσα, &c.

Plut. de fera num. vind. pag. 978. — Εἰδὼς ὅτι μῶρον ἀρετῆς ἀπ' αὐτῆς φερέμεναι φασγν γένεσιν ψυχὰς ἐαδίζουσι, καὶ τὸ θανάσιον ὡς ἰσχυρὸν αὐτίκας, καὶ ἐκ ἐξίτηλον ἐπέφυκεν ἐξ ἀνδρείας φασγν τῶν καλῶν ὑποτεροφῆς, καὶ ὁμιλίας φασγν φασγν φασγν, &c.

ing, nor his ear filled with hearing) he never rests content with, but in a manner despises the notions already acquired; always striving to enlarge and enrich his mind with intellectual treasure. So doth he tend nearer to divine omniscience.

And as his searches after truth, so his desires of good are in a manner boundless. No present, no definite good can long detain his liking, or fully content him: he soon doth suck it dry, and leaves it insipid; then longs and haunts after fresh entertainments: he seems poor to himself in the greatest plenty, and straitned in the most ample condition. In short, he ever aspires to somewhat more great and high than what he enjoys; finding in himself a kind of infinite (at least indefinite) ambition and covetousness, a restless tendency after farther degrees of joy and happiness; so doth he shoot himself on toward that highest mark of divine felicity.

Being sensible of his own mortal and transitory condition, he yet seeks to live for ever in his name and memory, labours to perform memorable actions, rears lasting monuments of his art and knowledge, of his wealth and power, of his bounty and munificence, by all means studying and striving to commend himself to the regard of posterity; thus affects he another sort of likeness unto God, even a kind of immortality and eternity.

If also being, through divine grace, awakened out of that drowsy state (which naturally in great measure hath seized upon all men) he discovereth his moral or spiritual wants and imperfections; he is then apt to breath and endeavour a nearer similitude to God, even in goodness, righteousness and purity; to labour in getting continually his inclinations more rectified, and his passions better composed; in restraining, subduing, destroying inordinate self-love, with the sensuality, the perverseness, the pride, the malice growing from that evil root; in promoting all virtuous desires and affections, especially reverence toward God his father, and charity toward man his brother; neither then can he be at ease or well content, till he arrive in such dispositions of mind to that nearness of perfection which his capacities do admit. And a man thus qualified in degree, thus tending in desire toward higher perfection in goodness, is indeed the most lively image that can be framed of God; being

εἰς ἐμύνασιν.
Colof. 3. 10.

Orig. in Cels.
Testimonium
anima natura
liter religiosa.
Tertull.

Animal religi-
onis capax.
Animus—hoc
habet argu-
mentum divi-
nitatis sua,
quod illum di-
vina delectant.
Sen. Nat.
quest. 1. præf.

(as St. Paul expresseth it) *renewed to an acknowledgment* (or better understanding of himself, of his maker, of true goodness) *according to the image of him that made him.* I might also propound to your consideration that *φύσις* (as one of our Fathers doth call it) that *natural proclivity* observable in man to acknowledge and worship God; to embrace religion both in opinion and practice, and especially on all occasions of need or distress to have recourse unto him, as an argument of his relation to God. 'Tis we see common in nature for all creatures to be readily acquainted with their parents, to run after them, to expect from them supply of wants, succour in straits, refuge and defence in dangers; from hence we may easily discern to what parent any child belongs: And since there appears the like instinct and capacity innate to man (and indeed to him alone, whence some Philosophers thought good from this property to define man, a creature capable of religion) since he is apt to entertain notions of God, to bear in his mind awe and respect toward him; since he is ready in all his straits (when other helps and hopes fail him) to lift up his heart and voice toward heaven for assistance; why may we not in like manner hence discern, and with like reason infer, that man is also in especial manner God's child and off-spring?

I might also adjoin, that the very power of framing conceptions, although imperfect and inadequate, concerning God, is in it self a faculty so very spiritual and sublime, that it argues something divine in man's soul. * That *like is known by its like*, was an axiome among ancient Philosophers; and that *spiritual things are spiritually discerned*, is the rule of a better Master in wisdom than they: And beasts surely, because not indued with reason, have no conceptions concerning man's nature, or the matters proper to him, (according to what rules, by what methods, to what purposes he doth act) so in likelihood should we not be able to apprehend and

* Arist. de An. 1. 2. *ψυχῶν κρείττον*
ἐμὸν ἢ τοῦ ζώου.
1 Cor. 2. 14.
Quis cælum possit nisi cæli munere nosse,
Et reperire Deum nisi qui pars ipse
deorum est? Manil. lib. 2.

discourse about things appertaining to God, his nature, the methods and reasons of his proceedings; the notions of eternal truth, the indispensable laws of right, the natural differences of good and evil, with such like high objects of thought, except our souls had in them some sparks of divine understanding; some cognation with and communcation from heaven.

I shall to these only subjoin one farther consideration worth attending to, that the wisest and most considerate men in several times, only by reflecting upon their own minds, and observing in them what was most lovely and excellent, most pure and streight, have fallen upon and conspired in notions concerning God, very suitable to those which we believe taught us by revelation; although contrary to the prejudices of their education, and to popular conceits: many admirable passages to this purpose we may find drop from the mouth of *Socrates*, and the pen of *Plato*; in *Cicero*, in *Epictetus*, yea in the least credulous or fanciful of men, *Aristotle* himself. Whence plainly enough we may collect how near affinity there is between God and us; how legible characters of the divinity are written upon our souls; how easily we may know God, if we be not ignorant of our selves; that we need not go far to fetch arguments to prove that God is, nor to find lessons to learn what he is; since we always carry both about us, or rather within us; since our souls could indeed come from no other than such a being, whom they so resemble and represent.

I have indulged my thoughts somewhat freely in this speculation, yet I hope not altogether impertinently, for that (as I before alledged) in the chief of God's works (observable by us) we may reasonably suppose that his glory doth chiefly shine; and will therefore be most discernible to us, if we open our eyes and apply our minds thereto.

II. Thus doth humane nature, being in each singular man, shew the existence of God, as its original author and pattern; considering also men as related and combined together in society, some glimpse of a divine power and wisdom ordering them toward it, and preserving them in it, may be perceived. As in the world natural, the parts thereof are so fitted in varieties of size, of quality, of aptitude to motion, that all may stick together (excluding chasms and vacuities) and all co-operate incessantly to the preservation of that common union and harmony which was there intended: So in the world political we may observe various propensions and aptitudes disposing men to collection and coherence and co-operation in society. They are apt to flock together, not only from a kind of necessity, discovered by reason, for mutual help and defence; but from a natural love to company and conversation, with an aptness to delight therein; and from an inbred aversion to that solitude, wherein many great appetites natural to man must needs be stifled. They are also marvellously fitted to maintain intercourse not only by the principal guide thereof, reason, but by that great instrument of it, speech, whereby men impart and as it were transfuse into one another their inmost thoughts; which faculty doth evidently relate unto, and plainly shews men naturally designed for society. In order thereto men are also indued with several subordinate inclinations and qualifications (arising from different temper of body, or disposition of mind) requisite to cement society, and preserve it for a competent durance in peace and order; so few being made very sagacious and provident, and thence fit to direct others, very quick and active, thence able to execute; others of a high spirit and courage, thence affecting and disposed to command; most others being dull in conceit, or heavy of temper, or of a soft spirit, and thence apt to follow, content to rest in mean state, willing to obey. All these things being so ordered, that even contrarieties of humour in men do serve to settle them in their due place and posture; to beget and preserve a peaceful union, and a decent harmony of action in society; which, supposing all men in ability and inclination more like or equal (able to do, apt to effect the same things) could hardly be; for then all men would be competitors and strugglers for the same thing, and so none would easily obtain, or peacefully enjoy it.

Now since it is plainly best for man to live thus in society, many great benefits thence accruing to him, (security to his life, safe enjoying the fruits of his

his industry, much ease by mutual assistance, much delight in conversation; all that civil people enjoy of convenience beyond Barbarians and Savages, or indeed above beasts) that men are so disposed and fited thereto, is an argument of mighty wisdom and great goodness in that cause, from whence all this proceeded; and such a cause is God.

Thus from the constitution of societies we may collect a provident care over humane affairs; the same also may be reasonably deduced from the preservation of them; for although man be inclined unto and fitted for society, yet being an agent very free and loose in his action (acting contingently, and without necessary subjection to any settled law or rule, as do other things in nature) no ordinary banks will constantly retain him in due place and order; so that the course of affairs, perverted by some mens irregular wills and passions, would run into great confusion, did not a wise care also continually govern things, seasonably interposing its hand, and thereby upholding, retaining, establishing them in order, or reducing them thereinto, did not a superintendent power restrain the fierceness of tyrants, the ambition of grandees, the greediness of oppressors, the wildness and precipitancy of factious multitudes; did not God sometime *break the arm of the wicked*; or (as Job speaks) *pour contempt upon princes, and weaken the strength of the mighty*; If he, that *stilleth the noise of the seas*, did not also *repress the tumults of the people*. Indeed as in nature it is wisely provided that tigers, wolves and foxes upon the earth, that kites in the air, and sharks in the sea, shall not so multiply and abound, but that many tame and gentle creatures shall abide there by them: So among men, that (among divers fierce, ravenous, crafty and mischievous men) so many poor, simple and harmless people do make a shift to live here in competent safety, liberty, ease and comfort, doth argue his special overwatching care and governance, who (as we are, in conformity to experience, taught by sacred scripture) hath an especial regard unto the poor, and unto the meek; providing for them, and protecting them.

I might subjoin those significations of providence, which the general connexion of mankind doth afford; things being so ordered, that several Nations and Societies shall be prompted by need or by advantage mutual to maintain correspondence and commerce with each other; under common laws and compacts, that so there should become a kind of union and harmony even among the several parts and elements, as it were, of the humane world. I might consider the benefit that arises (as in the natural world from contrary qualities and motions, so) in the humane world even from wars and contentions; how these rowze men from sloth, brush away divers vices, ferment and purge things into a better condition; but I will not strive to be so minute and subtle.

Here I shall conclude these sorts of argumentation, inferring the existence of God from the common effects obvious to our sense and experience, either in the greater world of Nature, or lesser world of Man; by which God doth continually in a still, though very audible voice, whisper this great truth into our ears. There be other sort of effects, more rare and extraordinary, which go above or against both those streams of natural and humane things, whereby God doth more loudly, as it were, and expressly proclaim his Being and Providence; the consideration of which I shall reserve to another time.

Grant, we beseech thee, Almighty God, that the words, which we have heard this day with our outward ears, may through thy grace be so grafted inwardly in our hearts, that they may bring forth in us the fruit of good living, to the honour and praise of thy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

I Believe in God.

SERMON VIII.

THE BEING of GOD

Proved from
Universal Consent.

PSALM 19. 3, 4.

*There is no speech, nor language, where their voice is not heard: their line (or rather according to the * LXX, their voice) is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world.* * who read לך קי instead of קי.

THE Psalmist doth in this place observe and affirm (very plainly) the Universality of Religion; that all Nations did conspire in acknowledging a Divinity, and ascribing thereto the framing and conservation of the heavens. He supposes the heavens to speak an universal Language, heard and understood by all people, therein glorifying God and declaring him their Maker.

Upon which supposition I purpose now to ground an argument to prove (that which formerly by several other kinds of discourse I have endeavoured to evince) that great fundamental truth concerning the existence of God, that is, of one incomprehensibly Excellent Being, the Maker and Governour of all things.

The argument (to be short) is that (as *Lactantius* speaks) * *universal* * *Testimonium* and unanimous testimony of people, and nations, through all courses of time, who (otherwise differing in language, custom and conceit) only have agreed in this one matter of Opinion. This testimony, in it self simply taken, hath indeed (according to the rules of reason and judgments of wise men) no small force; but seems to have much greater, if we consider the source, whatever that could be, whence it was derived. As to the thing absolutely taken; *Aristotle* thus ranks the degrees of probability: What seems true to some wise men is somewhat probable; what seems to the most or to all wise men is very probable; what most men, both wise and unwise, assent unto,

populorum at-
que gentium in
una hac re non
dissentium.
Lact. 1. 2.

Θείη δ' ἂν τις
τὸ δοκῶν τοῖς
σοφοῖς, εἰ μὴ
ἐναντίον ταῖς
ἤψι πολλῶν
διδέσταις ᾖ.
Top. i. 8.

unto, doth still more resemble truth; but what men generally consent in hath the highest probability, and approaches near to demonstrable truth; so near, that it may pass for ridiculous arrogance and self-conceitedness, or for intolerable obstinacy and perverseness to deny it. *A man* (saith the Philosopher) *may assume what seems true to the wise, if it do not contradict the common opinion of men*; no man's wisdom (he supposes) sufficient to balance the general authority of men. Indeed, when extravagant wits, and pretenders to wisdom (or to an extraordinary reach in knowledge) shall assert things evidently repugnant to sense or reason; that snow and coal have the like appearance (as did *Anaxagoras*,) that all motion is impossible (as *Zeno*,) that contradictory propositions may be consistent (as *Heraclitus*;) we may add to those instances, that all things in nature proceeded from Chance (as *Epicurus* and his followers;) what other means have we (since no principles can be more evident than such propositions as they reject) to confute them, or to decide the cause, than making appeal to the common sentiments of Mankind? which if they decline, what have we more to do than to laugh at, or pity them? however surely, he needs to have a very strong and very clear reason to shew, who dares to withstand the common suffrage of mankind, and to challenge all the world of mistake. Now somewhat to enforce this discourse; but more to evidence the matter of fact upon which it is grounded, and withal to make good that confirmation thereof, which was intimated; I shall alledge some few testimonies of ancient Philosophers (that is of witnesses in this cause most impartial and unsuspect-

Multum dare solemus presumptioni omnium hominum, apud nos veritatis argumentum est aliquid omnibus videri; tanquam deos esse sic colligimus, quod omnibus de Diis opinio insita est; nec ulla gens usquam est adeo extra leges moreq; projecta, ut non aliquos Deos credat. Sen. Epist. 117. vid. de Benef. 4. 4.

Firmisimum hoc afferri videtur cur Deos esse credamus, quod nulla gens tam fera, nemo omnium tam sit immanis, cuius mentem non imbuerit Deorum opinio. Multi de Diis prava sentiunt (id enim vitioso more effici solet) omnes tamen esse vim, & naturam divinam arbitrantur. — Omni autem in re consensio omnium gentium lex natura putanda est. Tusc. i. p. 299.

Vid. de Nat. D. i. pag. 22. & 2. pag. 53, 57; &c.

Ἐν τούτῳ ὃ πολέμῳ καὶ εὐνοίᾳ καὶ διαφωνίᾳ ἓνα ἰδοὺς ἂν ἐν πάσῃ γῇ οὐκ ὁμῶν ὅν νόμον καὶ λόγον, ὅτι θεὸς εἰς πάντων βασιλεὺς καὶ πατὴρ καὶ θεοὶ πολλοὶ, θεὸς παῖδες, συνάρχοντες θεῶ, ταῦτα ὃ ἑλλὰς λέγει, καὶ ὃ βάρβαρος λέγει, καὶ ὃ ἡπειρώτης, καὶ ὃ θαλάττιος, καὶ ὃ σοφός, καὶ ὃ ἄσοφος. Diff. i. p. 5.

Ἦν δ' ἐξεγένοντο ἐν τῷ ξύμπαντι αἰῶνι δύο πε καὶ τρεῖς ἀδελφοὶ καὶ τέκνα καὶ ἀδελφὸς γένος. ὡς ἀδύμῳ λέων, ὡς εὖς ἀκέρῳ, ὡς ὄρνις ἀπτερό. Id. 16. Καὶ τις ἐκ αὐτῶν ἐπὶ νύκτι τῷ ἡψι βαρβαρὸν σοφίαν, εἶγε μὴ εἰς αὐτῶν εἰς ἀδελφότητα ἐξέπεσε, μὴ δὲ ἀμφιβάλλουσι περὶ θεῶν, ἀρα γε εἰσιν, ἢ οὐκ εἰσιν, καὶ ἀρα γε ἡμῶν θεωρεῖσθαι, ἢ οὐκ, &c. Aelian. var. 2. 31.

ed) selected out of innumerable others extant and obvious, serving to the same purpose: *We are wont to attribute much* (saith *Seneca*) *to what all men presume*; 'tis an argument with us of truth, that any thing seems true to all; as that there be Gods we hence collect, for that all men have engrafted in them an opinion concerning Gods; neither is there any Nation so void of laws, or good manners, that it doth not believe there are some Gods; so doth he assert the matter of fact, and argue from it: the like doth *Cicero* in many places, sometimes in the person of his Dialogists, sometimes according to his own sense; pressing this argument as very weighty. This (saith he, in his *Tusculane questions*) seems a most firm thing, which is alledged, why we should believe Gods to be, because no Nation is so fierce, no man so wild, whose mind an opinion concerning Gods, hath not imbued: Many think amiss concerning Gods, for that uses to proceed from bad custom, but all do however conceive a divine power and nature to exist — Now in all things the consent of all nations is to be supposed a law of nature. We shall have other occasion to cite divers places out of *Plato* and *Aristotle*, confirming the same thing; I shall now only add these pregnant words of *Maximus Tyrius*: *In such a quarrelling, and tumult, and jangling* (about other matters of opinion) *you may see this one by common accord acknowledged law and speech, that there is one God, the King and Father of all; and many Gods, the children of God, and ruling together with him; this the Greek says, and this the Barbarian says; the inhabiter of the Continent, and the Islander; the wise, and the unwise do say the same.*

Thus it appears, by testimony abundantly sufficient (to which also all Histories ancient and modern do agree) that our conclusion hath been the Catholick and current doctrine of all times and of all places; so that who denies assent thereto, is beyond measure paradoxical, and belongs to a Sect very thin and weak; is in opinion *what a monster is in nature*, a thing extraordinary and uncouth; as a *Lion without courage, an Ox without Horns, a Bird without wings* (as the Philosopher speaks) a thing which seldom

feldom happens to be, and that never without some great error, or defect.

But if, as surely he will, our haughty adversary, shall refuse the verdict of this grand Jury, we may assert its authority, not only as competent in it self, but as more considerable in respect to the causes, whence it proceeded, or from the manner by which this general consent can be conceived to have been produced and propagated among men. That men should thus conspire in opinion must needs proceed either 1. from hence, that such an opinion was by way of natural light or instinct (as the first most evident principles of science are conceived to be, or as the most effectual propensions toward good are) implanted in Man's nature; thus *Cicero* and other Philosophers suppose it to have come: In him it is thus said; and argued: *Since not by any institution, or custom, or law, this opinion is established, and among all, without exception, a firm consent doth abide, it is necessary there should be Gods; we having implanted, or rather ibred notions concerning them; but about whatever men naturally do agree, that must needs be true; we must therefore confess there are Gods.* Thus doth he draw this opinion from original light of nature. Or, 2. it may come from a common inclination in man's soul naturally disposing every man to entertain this opinion, whenever it is propounded, as there is in our eyes a natural readiness to perceive the light, whenever it shines before us; thus others explain the rise thereof, as *Julian* particularly: *We all, saith he, without being taught (without any painful or long instruction) are perswaded, that a Divinity exists; and to regard it, and to have, we may suppose, a speedy tendency (or recourse) thereto; being in such manner disposed thereto in our souls, as things endued with the faculty of seeing are to the light:*

the same similitude is, as I remember, used by *Plato* to the same purpose. Or, 3. it may come hence, that some very prevalent reason (obvious to all men, even to the most rude and barbarous, and flowing from common principles or notions of truth) did beget this agreement in them: Thus *Plutarch* derives it from mens common observation of the Stars constant order and motion; So *St. Paul* also seems to imply, the knowledge of God manifest to all men from the creation of the world, and the works of God visible therein; and here (in this 19th *Psalms*) the Prophet may seem to intend the same, although it be not certain he does; for that general acknowledgment and glorifying of God as maker of the heavens, which he avouches, may be understood as well the consequence as the cause of this religious opinion. Or, 4. it might from some common fountain of instruction (from one ancient Master, or one primitive tradition) be conveyed, as from one common head or source into many particular conduits. Thus the Author of the Book *de Mundo* (dedicated to *Alexander*) seems to deduce it: *It is an ancient saying, says he, and running in the race of all men, that from God all things, and by God all things were constituted, and do consist.* The like *Aristotle* himself im-

plies in a notable place, which we shall afterward have occasion to produce. No other way beside one of these can we (following experience or reason) imagine by which any opinion or practice should prevail generally among men, who otherwise are so apt to differ and dissent in judgment about things. And be it any one or more of these ways that this opinion became so universally instilled into mens minds, our argument will thereby gain weight and force: If we assign or acknowledge any of the two first ways, we do in effect yield the question; and grant it unreasonable to deny our conclusion: if nature forcibly drives men, or strongly draws men into this persuasion (nature, which always we find in her notions and in her instincts very sincere and faithful, not only to our selves, but to all other creatures) how vain an extravagancy will it then be to oppose it? Also, if we grant that plain reason, apparent to the generality of men, hath moved them to consent herein, do we not therefore by dissenting from it, re-

Cum enim non instituto aliquo, aut more, aut lege sit opinio constituta, manifeste ad unum omnium firma consensus, intelligi necesse est esse Deos, quoniam in fitas eorum, vel potius innatas cognitiones habemus; de quo autem omnium natura consentit, id verum esse necesse est. Esse igitur Deos confitendum est. De N. D. 1. pag. 22. vid. 2. de N. D. 53, 57, &c.

Πάντες ἀδιδάκτως ἢ θεῶν τι πέποιμεθα, καὶ πρὸς τὸ αὐτὸ ἀπορρῶν, ἐπ' αὐτὸ τε, οἶμαι, σπένδον· ὅτω διατετέμενοι τὰς ψυχὰς πρὸς αὐτὸ, ὥστε οἶμαι πρὸς τὸ ὡς τὰ βλέποντα. Jul. ad Heraclitum.

Plut. de plac. 1. 6.

Rom. 1. 19, 20.

Ἀρχαῖοι μὲν ἐν τῇ λόγῳ, καὶ πατέρις ἐπὶ πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις, ὡς ἐν θεῷ τὰ πάντα, καὶ διὰ θεῶν ἡμῶν συνέστηκεν. Cap. 6.

Metaph. 12. 8.

nounce common sense, and confess our selves unreasonable: But if we say, that it did arise in the last manner, from a common instruction or primitive tradition (as indeed to my seeming from that chiefly, assisted by good reason, it most probably did arise) we shall thereby be driven to inquire, who that common Master, or the Authour of such tradition was; Of any such we find no name recorded (as we do of them, who have by plausible reasons or artifices drawn whole Nations and Sects of people to a belief of their doctrine) we find no time when, no place where, no manner how it began to grow or spread, as in other cases hath been wont to appear; what then can we otherwise reasonably deem, than that the first deliverers and teachers thereof were none other, than the first parents of mankind it self, who as they could not be ignorant of their own original, so could not but take care by ordinary education to convey the knowledge thereof to their Children; whence it must needs insensibly spread it self over all posterities of men, being sucked in with their milk, being taught them together with their first rudiments of speech? Thus doth that consideration lead us to another, very advantageous to our purpose; that mankind hath proceeded from one common stock of one man or a few men gathered together; which doth upon a double score confirm our assertion: first, as proving the generations of men had a beginning; secondly, as affording us their most weighty authority for the doctrine we assert. For, 1. Supposing mankind had a beginning upon this earth, whence could it proceed but from such a being as we assert? who, but such an one (so wise, powerful and good) could or would form these bodies of ours so full of wonderful artifice? who should infuse those

De gener. Anim. 3. cap. ult.

Stoici putant homines in omnibus terris, ex agris generatos tanquam fungos. Lact. 7. 4.
Vid. Lips. Phys. Stoic. 3. 3.

divine endowments, (not only of life and sense, but) of understanding and reason? *Aristotle* discoursing about the generation of Animals, says, *If man (or any other perfect animal) were γυνῆς, he must be necessarily produced, either as out of a Worm, or as from an Egg*; but is it not ridiculous to suppose him to arise in either of those manners? did we, did ever any one in any age observe any such production of a man? yet, why if once it could be, should it not happen sometime, yea often again, in some part of the earth, in so many thousand years? what peculiar lucky temper of slime can we imagine to have been then, which not at sometime afterward, not somewhere should appear again? Experience sufficiently declares, that more is required to so noble a production, that men no otherwise come into the world, than either from another man (fitted in a manner curious above our conception with many organs most exquisitely suited to that purpose) or immediately from a cause incomprehensibly great and wise. And could we without fondness conceive man's body possibly might arise (like Mice, as *Diodorus Siculus* tells us, out of the mudd of *Nilus*) from earth and water fermented together, and organized by the Sun's heat; yet, (as more largely we have discoursed at another time) we cannot however well suppose his soul, that principle of operations so excellent (so much different from, so far elevated above all material motions) to spring up from dirty stuff however baked, or boiled by heat. I ask also, (supposing still this notion derived from the first men) 2. who instilled even this notion into them? why they should conceive themselves to come from God, if they did not find it so; if he that made them, did not sensibly discover himself to them, and shew them, that to him they owed their being? In short, if they did testify and teach their posterity, that they came from God, we can have no reason to disbelieve them; nor can imagine more credible witnesses, or more reasonable instructours than themselves concerning their own original: 'tis a discourse (this) which

Πιστεῖν τοῖς εἰρηκόσιν ἔμφροθεν ἐκ-
γόνους μὴ θεῶν εἶναι, ὡς ἔφασαν, σαφῶς
ὅτι πᾶς τὸς αὐτῶν προγόνους εἰδὼσιν· ἀ-
δύνατον δὲ θεῶν παῖσιν ἀπιστεῖν καὶ περ
ἀνευ τε ἐκόντων καὶ ἀναγκάων ἀπο-
δείξεων λέγεσθαι, ἀλλ' ὡς δικαία φά-
σκουσιν ἀπαγγέλλειν, ἐπομένως τῷ νό-
μῳ πισευτέον. *Tim. p. 1053*

we find even in *Plato*: *We must (saith he) yield credence to them, who first avouched themselves the off-spring of God, and did sure clearly know their own progenitours; It is indeed impossible to distrust the children of the Gods, although otherwise speaking without plausible, or necessary demonstrations; but, following Law, we must believe them, as testifying about matters peculiarly belonging to themselves.* Thus

Thus do these two notions, that of general tradition concerning God, and that concerning Man's origine upon earth from one stock, mutually support and defend each other. And indeed concerning the latter there be divers other arguments of the same kind, although perhaps hardly any so clear and valid, confirming it; I mean divers common opinions, stories and practices of an unaccountable rise, which cannot be well deemed to have been introduced, and so universally diffused among men otherwise than from this fountain. I think it worth the while to propound some instances thereof, of each kind.

—*qua si singula vos forte non movent, universa certe inter se connexa, atque conjuncta movere debebunt. Cic. de N. D. 2.*

Even this opinion or story it self, concerning Mankind, proceeding from one single or very narrow stock, was commonly received, and that from this head of tradition; as also divers other concerning the nature and state of Man. That God did form Man, and breath his soul into him (as *Aratus* says, that *we are God's offspring*, and as *Cicero* speaks, that *we have our souls drawn, and dropt from the divine nature*) might be shewn by innumerable testimonies to have been a general opinion; which although it have a very strong foundation in reason, yet it seems rather to have obtained by virtue of tradition.

Cic. divin. 1.

That Man was formed after the image of God, and doth much resemble him, was also a general opinion, as *Aristotle* himself observes; and *Ovid* most expressly, according to what he found set down in ancient stories.

Ἀνθρωποειδὲς θεός, &c. Metaph. 12. 8. "Ὅσαρ' ὃ πάσι καὶ τὰ αὐτοῖς ἀφομοῖσι, ἔτω καὶ τὰς βίους ἢ θεῶν. Polit. 1. 1.

Finxit ad effigiem.

That Man's soul is immortal, and destined to a future state of life, in joy or pain respectively, according to his merits or demerits in this life; that there should accordingly pass severe scrutinies and judgments after death upon the actions of this life; that there were places provided of rest and pleasure for good men, of horror and misery for bad men departed; were opinions that did commonly possess mens minds; none of them, it seems, upon the force of any arguments, having a common influence upon mens minds (such as *Philosophers* did by speculation invent, being indeed too subtle for vulgar capacities to apprehend, and scarce able to persuade themselves) but rather from their education, continued through all times, and commencing from that head we speak of; as even such *Philosophers* themselves confess: *We must* (says *Plato*) *believe the reports of this kind* (speaking about these matters) *being so many, and so very ancient.* And, *We suppose* (saith *Cicero*) *that souls abide after death, from the consent of all Nations.* And, *I cannot*, saith he again, *assent unto those, who have lately begun to discourse, that souls do perish together with bodies, and that all things are blotted out by death; the aucthority of the antients doth more prevail with me.* And, *When* (saith *Seneca*) *we dispute concerning the eternity of souls, the consent of men either fearing or worshipping the Inferi* (that is, the state of things after death) *hath no slight moment with us.* Even *Celsus* himself (an *Epicurean* *Philosopher*, and great enemy of our faith) confesses, that *divine men had delivered it, that happy souls should enjoy a happy life hereafter.*

Πιστεύειν ὃ ἢ ἀλλὰ τις φήμους χρεῶν καὶ τὰ τοιαῦτα ἔτω πολλὰ καὶ ὅσοι παλαιὰ ἔσονται. Plat. de leg. 2. Vid. Gorg. sub fin.

Permanere animos arbitramur consensu nationum omnium. Cic. Tusc. 1.

Neque enim assentior iis, qui hæc nuper disserere ceperunt cum corporibus simul animas interire, atque omnia morte deleri; plus apud me antiquitas valet, &c. Cic. Læl.

Cum de animarum aternitate differimus, non leve momentum apud nos habet consensus hominum aut timendum inferos, aut colentium. Sen. Ep. 177.

Ἰσθὲντι θεοῖς ἀνδράσι εὐδαιμονίῃ ψυχῆς εὐδαιμονοῖ. Celsus apud Orig. pag. 350.

The opinion concerning Man having sometimes been in a better state (both in regard to complexion of mind, and outward accommodations of life) but that he did by his wilful miscarriages fall thence into this wretched condition of proneness to sin, and subjection to sorrow, was an ancient doctrine (if we take *Plato's* word) and concerning it *Cicero* hath these remarkable words: *From which errors and miseries of humane life we may* (saith he) *conclude, that sometime those ancient prophets, or interpreters of the Divine mind in the delivery of holy mysteries, who have said, that we are born to undergo punishments for the faults committed in a former life, may seem to have understood somewhat.* ('Tis true, these Authors assign this fall to the souls of

Παλαιὸς τις λόγος. Phæd.

Ex quibus humana vita erroribus atque arumnis fit, ut interdum veteres illi vates sive in sacris initiisque tradendis divina mentis interpretes, qui nos ob scelera suscepta in vita superiore penarum luendarum causa natos esse dixerunt, aliquid vidisse videantur, &c. Cic. fragm. pag. 79.

*Primi mortali-
um, quique ex
his geniti na-
turam incor-
rupti seque-
bantur, &c.
Sen. Ep. 90.*

*--χέρων πύθ-
μεγα πᾶμ-
ἀρεῶσα ἔσ-
κέδασ', ἀν-
θρώποισι δ'
ἐμήσατο κή-
δεα λύγχα.
Hes. ἔ γ.*

In Phædr.

singular persons in a state of pre-existence; but it is plain enough, how easy it might be so to mistake and transform the story.) To the same head may be referr'd that current story concerning the Golden Age, in which men first did live so happily without care and pain; which so lively expresses Man's condition in Paradise. As also thereto may belong that relation concerning Man's being thrown into this miserable state, because of a rapine committed against God's will, and that by the means of a Woman sent down; who, *with her hands opened the lid of a great vessel* (fraught with mischiefs) *and thence dispersed sad disasters and sorrows among men*; as *Hesiod* expresseth it, in words very applicable to the fact of our mother *Eve*, and the event following it.

I do not know also whether what *Plato* says concerning man's being at first ἀνδρόγυνος (of both sexes) and being afterward cleaved into two, was borrowed from tradition, or devised from his own fancy; it surely well comports with the sacred History concerning Woman being taken out of Man. That there are two prime causes, or principles, one of good things, the other of bad, was the ancient doctrine among all the ancient Nations; of the *Persians* (who called one of them *Oromasdes*, the other *Arimanius*;) of the *Egyptians* (who had their *Osiris* and *Typhon*) of the *Chaldeans* (who had their good and bad Planets) of the *Greeks* (who had their good and bad Dæmon, their Ζεὺς and Ἔρως) we have reported by *Plutarch* in his tract *de Iside & Osiride*, by *Laertius* in his *Proæme*, and others (*Aug. de Civ. D. 5. 21.*) which conceits seem derived from the ancient traditions concerning God the author of all Good, and *Sathan* the tempter to all evil, and the minister of divine vengeance (*Plutarch* expressly says the good principle was called *God*, the bad one *Dæmon*.) Indeed there were many other relations concerning matters of fact, or pieces of ancient story, agreeing with the sacred writings, which did among the ancient people pass commonly, although somewhat disguised by alterations incident from time and other causes; which seem best derivable from this common fountain: Such as that concerning the *Sons of God*, and *Heroes* dwelling on the earth; concerning men of old time exceeding those of following times in length of life, in stature, in strength of body, whereof in ancient Poets there is so much mention; concerning mens conspiring in rebellion against God, affecting and attempting to climb heaven; concerning mankind being overwhelmed and destroyed by an universal deluge, and that by divine justice, because of cruelty and oppression (with other enormous vices) generally reigning:

—*Quà terra patet feræ regnat Erinny,
In facinus jurasse putes, dent ocyus omnes
Quas meruere pati (sic stat sententia) pœnas.*

All over the earth fierce rage doth reign; you would take them to have sworn to do mischief; let them all immediately undergo the pains which they have deserved; this is my resolution: So God, in *Ovid's* style, declared the reason, why he decreed to bring that sore calamity upon mankind: I might add that prophecy commonly known, that this World shall finally perish by a general conflagration.

*Clem. Str. 5.
p. 442.*

These opinions and stories chiefly concern Man; there were divers others concerning God and Religion, sprouting probably from the same root. That divine goodness was the pure motive of God's making the World, seems to have been a tradition, implied by their saying, that *Love was the first, and the chief of the Gods*: πρώτιστον μὲν ἔγωγα θεῶν μνησάτο πάντων, said *Parmenides*; and Ἦδ' ἔργος, ὃς πάντεσσι, μεταπέμπει ἀθανάτοισι, said *Hesiod*. That God made the world out of a *Chaos*, or confused heap of matter; which is so plainly expressed in *Hesiod*, in *Ovid*, and in other ancient Writers. That God did make or beget inferior insensible powers (of great understanding and ability, whom they called Gods, and the children of the sovereign God) whom God immediately did converse with, and in royal manner did govern; whom he did employ as spies and agents in providential administrations of humane affairs; who did frequently appear unto, and familiarly converse with men; who do walk up and down the earth observing mens actions; secretly assisting and comforting good

*Arist. Metaph.
1. 4.*

Arist. Pol. 1. 1.

good men, restraining and crossing, and punishing the bad; whereof we have so many instances in *Homer*, in *Hesiod*, and in other ancient Writers; shewing as to those matters the general conceits of the old World.

That God's especial presence and residence was above, in heaven, *Aristotle* expressly tells us was the belief of all men: *All men, saith he, have an opinion concerning Gods, and all men assign the highest place to the Gods, both Greeks and Barbarians.*

Πάντες γὰρ ἄνθρωποι πρὸς θεῶν
ἐχουσιν ὑπόληψιν, καὶ πάντες τὴν ἀνω-
τάτω πρὸς θεῶν τόπον ἀποδιδέασιν καὶ
βάρβαροι καὶ Ἕλληνες. De Cael. 1. 3.

That God's providence did extend it self to all particularities of affairs; and that all things were ordered by him, he constantly exercising both benignity and justice suitably to the deserts and needs of men; encouraging and assisting, blessing and rewarding vertuous and pious men; relieving the distressed and helpless; controlling and chastising such as were outrageously unjust or impious. *That God doth know all the actions, words and inward thoughts of men.* Vid. Cl. Strom. 5.

That God at seasons used to declare his mind to men (his approbation or displeasure in regard to their doings) by accidents preternatural or prodigious; did presignify future events; did impart fore-knowledge of them in several ways; by dreams, by visions, by inspirations, &c. To these opinions were answerable divers common practices: Invoking divine help in need; consulting God by oracle, in case of ignorance or doubt; deprecating divine vengeance; making acknowledgments to God in hymns and praises; returning oblations for benefits received, both common and special; expiating guilt, and appeasing God's wrath by purgations and by sacrifices (a practice peculiarly unlikely to proceed from any other reason than institution) fortifying testimonies and promises by oath, or appeal to divine knowledge and justice; invoking (upon condition) God's judgments upon themselves or others what is called cursing; appointing Priests for God's service, and yielding them extraordinary respect; consecrating Temples and Altars; making vows, and dedicating gifts; celebrating Festivals; paying Tithes (that very determinate part) of the fruits of the earth, of the spoils in war, of the gains in trade, by way of acknowledgment and thankfulness to the donour and disposer of all things: In which, and the like opinions and performances (which it would be a long business particularly to insist on) mens general concurrence doth fairly argue, that their Religion did peculiarly result from one simple institution common to mankind.

That there will be a future judgment, and rewards suited to the practices of men in this life. Vid. Cl. Str. 5. p. 442.

To these we might adjoin divers civil customs, wherein most Nations did, from this cause probably, conspire: For instance, Their counting by Decads, or stopping at Ten in their numerical computations; which *Aristotle* says, all men, both *Barbarians* and *Greeks*, did use, noting that so common an agreement could not arise from chance, but from nature; but it is much more plausible to assign its rise to tradition. Their having every where anciently the same number of letters, and the same names (or little varied) of them. Their dividing time into weeks (or systems of seven days) of which practice to have been general there be many plain testimonies. Their beginning the *νυχθημέραν* (or account of the daily revolution of the heavens) from the night, grounded probably

Πάντες ἄνθρωποι καὶ βάρβαροι καὶ Ἕλληνες εἰς τὰ δέκα καταειδυμένοι — καὶ γὰρ τὸ ἀπὸ τέχνης γε αὐτὰ ποιήσεις φαίνονται, καὶ αἱ τὰ τὸ δὲ καὶ ἐπὶ πάντων ἐκ ἀπὸ τέχνης, ἀλλὰ φυσικῶν. Arist. Prob. 153.

upon the report that night did precede day, (as *Hesiod* phraseth it) that *night did beget day*. Their general abhorrence of incestuous copulations; of which there is indeed some ground in nature, but none I suppose so very clear or discernible, as might serve alone to produce such a consent; yea perhaps, if one consider it, the whole business concerning matrimony will seem drawn from the head we discourse of. Their great care of Funerals, and decently interring the dead; which *Cicero* indeed deduces as a consequence upon their belief of the Soul's immortality. In fine, The Consent of the Old World in all moral notions of moment doth (to my sense) much imply the same thing; which notions although natural reason well used might suggest to all men; yet men (it seems) were never so generally disposed to reason well, as thereby alone to discern and approve unanimously the same truths;

Νυχθὲς δ' αὐτὴ αἰδὴς τε καὶ ἡμέρη ἐξεγένοντο. Hesiod. Theog.
— dies natales, & mensum, & annorum initia sic observant, ut noctem dies subsequatur. Cael. de Gal. 1. 6.

truths ; especially truths of this nature ; which many men are apt to dislike, (as repugnant to their desires) and consequently not ready to believe ; which yet might easily by education be infused into their minds, and by virtue of the prejudice thereby begot (assisted by plausible reason and popular consent) be preserved and rooted in them.

Now these (with divers more perhaps, which they, who are curiously inquisitive might observe) common persuasions (whether concerning matters of universal truth, or of particular facts) and those common usages having little or nothing of foundation apparent in Man's nature, or in the clear reason of the thing ; no prevailing appetite or inclination of man's soul prompting to them ; no occasion commonly incident to humane affairs, being apt to suggest them (at least divers of them ; there being indeed rather an aptitude in men to disapprove and resist them, as crosses to their dispositions) we cannot reasonably deduce them from any other cause than such as we have assigned ; Mens being (as St. Paul speaks) *made of one blood*, and receiving, as their nature, so their principles of opinion and practice, from the same common parents.

To confirm which discourse, and to prevent farther objections against it, we may consider, that however perhaps among some very barbarous Nations this principal tradition (together with others mentioned, attending thereon) may have been almost worn out by time and mens stupid negligence ; that however also among some people, affecting semblances of singular wisdom, as among the *Greeks*, the matter thereof might fall under question ; and some might doubt thereof, others contradict and deny it ; yet most ancient Histories (particularly that of *Moses*, far most ancient of all, and therefore, even secluding its special and more sacred authority, of all most credible) do attest them to have been, in substance, universally received, running with a strong and clear current among the *Eastern* people (the *Chaldeans*, *Phœnicians* and *Egyptians*) who that they were the most ancient inhabitants of the Earth, from whom the rest of mankind was propagated, the antiquity of Empires among them, the first use of Letters, the rise of Arts, the greater progress in all kinds of civil culture (which things argue a longer continuance in one place and state) beside express records of story and visible monuments of things performed among them, do sufficiently declare ; whose consent therefore doth in reason, so far as serves our purpose, involve the consent of all mankind ; and doth confirm those notions to have flowed from the clear spring of our first parents their instruction.

'Tis also true, I must confess, that these original traditions (concerning the Being and Providence of God) as must necessarily happen not only by the malice of Evil Spirits, but from Man's natural infirmity and proneness to change, even to the worse (as also from mens aptness to mistake, from rude ignorance, from wantonness of fancy, from craftiness in promoting designs of ambition and covetousness by introducing novelties, and from such like causes) did soon begin to be adulterated by many corrupt mixtures, did by degrees degenerate exceedingly into various shapes of superstition, falsehood and futility. Yet even so was *Judaism* depraved by the *Scribes* ; and *Christianity* it self hath been strangely debased by a long course of ignorant and bad times ; yet who can doubt but both these were derived from one pure instruction ; that of *Moses*, this of *Christ* our Lord ? That it might so fare with the primitive traditions of religion, is evident ; that it really did so, we have even the judgment and

assertion of *Aristotle* himself, in those remarkable words of his to this purpose : *There were, saith he, things conveyed traditionally by the primitive and ancient men, and left in a fabulous dress to their posterity ; that there are these Gods, and that divinity maintains (or encompasses) all nature : but other things were to these fictitiously superinduced for persuasion of the vulgar sort, and for the use of laws and publick commodity : Hence they speak of the Gods, as having a humane shape, or resembling other living creatures, and other things consequent upon, or agreeable to these sayings ; from which things if we separate that only which was first delivered,*

Παραδεδόται ὅ ἡμετέροις ἀρχαίων
καὶ παλαιῶν ἐν μύθῳ σχήματι κατα-
λειμμένα τοῖς ὕστερον, ὅτι θεοὶ τὲ εἰσιν
ἔτι, καὶ φαίνεται τὸ θεῖον τῶν ὅλων
φύσει. τὰ δὲ λοιπὰ μυθικῶς ἢ διὰ περ-
σῆς καὶ περὶ τῶν περὶ πολλῶν,
καὶ περὶ τῶν εἰς τὰς νόμους καὶ τὸ συμ-
φῆρον χρῆσιν. ἀνθρωποειδῆς γὰρ τὰ
θεοῖς, καὶ ἡμῶν ζώων ὁμοίως τισὶ
λέγουσι, καὶ τέτοις ἔτερος ἀκόλουθα, καὶ
ἀνθρωπίνῃ τῶν εἰρημένων. ὧν εἰ τις
χωρίσας αὐτὰ λάβοι μόνον τὸ πρῶτον,
ὅτι θεὸς ὁντο τὰς πρώτας εἰδὼς ἢ,
θεῖος αὖ εἰρηδὲς νομίσσει. καὶ κατὰ τὸ εἰ-
κὸς

that

things if we separate that only which was first delivered, that they deemed the Gods the first Beings, we may suppose what they said divinely spoken. And 'tis according to probability, all art and philosophy being, as might possibly, often invented and lost again, that even these opinions of them have as reliques been preserved until now: the opinion then of our Fathers, and that which came from the first men, is only thus far manifested to us.

Thus did the Philosopher, with a sagacity worthy so great a man, discern, that through that coarser ore, consisting in great part of dross and feculency (taken from the fondness, or fraud of human invention, or from diabolical suggestion) a pure vein of truth did run, drawn from the source of Primitive tradition; from which being supposed, we do infer, what he acknowledges divinely said, that there doth exist one first Being or substance, incomprehensibly excellent in all perfection. The like observations and judgments might be produced out of divers other Wise men (*Plato, Cicero, and the like*) who acknowledge and urge this common tradition as a good argument of the truths we maintain, as to the substance of them; yet scruple not to dissent from and to reprehend the vulgar errors and bad customs, which had crept in and became annexed to them. But let thus much suffice for this whole argument; being the last of those I intend to use for the proof of that fundamental Point, which is the root of all religion and piety.

I have produced several arguments to that purpose (or rather several kinds of arguments, each containing many subordinate ones) most proper (I conceive) and apt to have a general efficacy upon mens minds, in begetting and confirming a belief thereof. Each of them have indeed, to my seeming, even singly taken a force irresistible; and the greatest in its kind, that any such conclusion, not immediately apparent to sense, is capable of. The existence of any one cause in natural Philosophy, is not there demonstrable by effects in any proportion so many or various, so conspicuous or certain. No question can be determined by an authority so ample and comprehensive, so express and peremptory. No doctrine can to its confirmation alledge so general, so constant, so uniform a tradition. No matter of fact can be assured by testimonies so many in number, so various in kind, so weighty in quality, as those, upon which this conclusion doth stand. And if we join together all these, in themselves so considerable and powerful forces, how can we be able to resist them? how can we dare to doubt of that, which they conspire to infer? When, I say, to the universal harmony of Nature the common voice of Nations doth yield its consent; when with the ordinary course of things, so many extraordinary accidents do concur in vote; when that which many reasons prove, continual tradition also teaches; what can the result be, but firm persuasion in every wise and honest heart of the proposition so confirmed? Except we can suppose, that, by a fatal conspiracy, all the appearances in nature; and all the generations of men; the highest reason and the greatest authority imaginable have combined to deceive us.

In the precedent Discourses I have endeavoured to prove the Existence of God, by arguments, which do indeed more immediately evince those three principal attributes, Wisdom, Power and Goodness incomprehensible, but which also consequentially declare all other the attributes commonly esteemed ingredients of that notion, which answers to the name of God; (absolutely put, and without any adjunct limiting and diminishing it;) all those attributes which *Aristotle's* definition, *The eternal most excellent living thing*; or that of *Tertullian*, *the supreme great thing*; do include or imply; namely, his *Unity* first; then his *Eternity* and *Indefeasibility*; his immense *Omnipresence*, his *Spirituality*, his *Justice* and *Veracity*; his *Sovereign Majesty* and authority; with the like connected to those

καὶ πολλὰς εὐρημένους εἰς τὸ δυνα-
τὸν ἐκείνης καὶ τέχνης, καὶ φιλοσοφίας,
καὶ πάλιν φθερομένων καὶ ταύτας τὰς
δόξας ἐκείνων, οἷον λείψανα πειρε-
σάμεν μέχρι τῶν νῦν. ἢ καὶ ἐν πάσει
δόξᾳ, καὶ ἡ πρῶτη αὐτῶν πρῶτων ἐπὶ το-
σούτων ἡμῖν φανερὰ μόνον. *Arist. Me-
taphyl. 12. 8.*

ἑαμέν δὲ τὸν θεὸν ἢ ζῶν ἀίδιον
ἄειον. *Arist. Metaph. 12. 7.*

*Summum magnum, ἔσ' forma, ἔσ'
ratione, ἔσ' vi, ἔσ' potestate.* *Ter-
adv. Marc. 1. 3.*

Ἡ μακαρία φύσις ἡ ἀρδον α-
γαθότης τὸ ἀγαπῆτον πᾶσι τοῖς
λόγῳ μεταληφείσιν τὸ πολυπρόσητον
καλλόν ἢ ἀρχὴ αὐτῶν ὄντων ἢ πηγὴ
τῆς ζωῆς τὸ νοεῖν ὡς ἡ ἀπερίσ-
σοφα. *Basil. hexaem. λογ. α.*

(for

(for I cannot prosecute all the divine perfections, according to that multiplicity of distinction, which our manner of conceit and expression is wont to assign.)

The uniformity, concord, and perfect harmony, which appears in the constitution and conservation of things, their conspiring to one end, their continuing in the same order and course, do plainly declare the *Unity* of God; even as the lasting peace of a Commonwealth (composed of persons different in affections and humour) argues one law, that regulates and contains them; as the orderly march of an Army shews it managed by one conduct; as the uniformity of a House, or of a Town declares it contrived by one Architect.

And hereto also the common suffrage of mankind doth in a manner agree: for, however that they worshipped a multitude of inferiour Deities, yet that there was one Supreme God, Authour and Governour of the rest, and of all things beside; transcending in power and wisdom, and all kind of perfection, was evidently the common opinion; whom therefore we see

ἡ ἑστὶς, ἡ ἐξ ἑστὶς, ἡ ἐξ ἑστὶς.

Major popularitas generis humani—
etiam tantâ idololatriâ dominationem
obumbrante, seorsum tamen illum,
quasi proprio nomine Deum perhibent;
Et Deum Deorum; Et si Deus dede-
rit; Et quod Deo placet; Et Deo
commendo. Tertull. adv. Marc. i.
10.

In Tim.

Cic. i. de N.D.
Arist. de
Mund. cap. 7.

Quoties voles, tibi licet aliter hunc
auctorem rerum nostrarum compellare:
tot appellationes ejus esse possunt, quot
munera; hunc Et Liberum patrem,
Et Herculem, ac Mercurium nostri
putant; sic hunc naturam voca, fa-
tum, fortunam; Omnia ejusdem Dei
sunt variè utentis sua potestate. Sen.
de Benef. 4. 7.

See that most remarkable Saying
of Sophocles (apud Grot. in Excerpt.
p. 149.) Ἐς ταῖς ἀλλοθιαισιν, Ἐς
ἕν θεός, &c. Mars. Fic. in arg.
lib. 10. de Leg.

the Poets (the best interpreters of the popular opinions) do style the *Father of Gods and Men; the King of the Gods; the most High, most great, most excellent, &c.* The greater popularity (as Tertullian speaks) of mankind, even when Idolatry obscured the sense of divine providence, did however appropriate the Name of God especially to one; in their usual expressions; being wont to say, if God grant; and what pleases God, and I commend it to God. And if the Vulgar had in some measure this conceit, the wiser fort appear to have had more clear and full apprehensions

and persuasions concerning it. Plato refers the making of the World to one whom he calls *πατήρ καὶ ποιητὴν* (the Father and Maker of the Universe.) Aristotle, when he hath occasion to speak of God, doth usually speak in the singular; so do other Philosophers, as the Stoicks, in their famous precept, *Deum sequi* (to follow God, that is, to acquiesce in, or submit to divine providence) sometime they do expressly signify this to be their opinion: There are many popular Gods, said Antisthenes, but one Natural one; Ἐς ὁ ἅν πολυωνυμὸς ὢν. Being really One (saith the Authour de Mundo) he hath many names, according to the several affections he discovers, and the operations he exerts;

with whom Seneca thus agrees: So often as you please, you may diversly name the Authour of things: there may be so many appellations of him, as there be gifts or offices and operations; him our people fancy to be Father Bacchus, and Hercules, and Mercury; call him also Nature, Fate, Fortune; all these are but names of the same God, variously using his power: if they ever speak of Gods plurally, they are to be understood to speak with the like opinion of them, as we of Angels, that is, of invisible, intelligent powers, created by the supreme God, dependent of him, subject to him; Mars. Ficinus his caution concerning Plato being applicable to the rest: *sed nè turbet quæso Deorum numerus, quem non turbat numerus angelorum. Nihil enim plus apud Platonem tot possunt Dii, quam apud nos tot angeli, totque beati.* So much for God's Unity.

As to his Eternity; If God made all things, he could not receive being from another; and, He who made this World, what reason can there be to suppose him to be from another? Nor can any thing receive a being from it self, or from mere nothing spring up into being; therefore the Maker of the World must be Eternal. Something of necessity must be eternal, otherwise nothing could have been at all; other things shew themselves to have proceeded from the wisdom, power and goodness of One; whence that One is Eternal; and so all Nations have consented that God is.

That he is immortal and immutable doth also follow plainly: for he not depending for his being, or any thing thereto belonging, upon any other thing, neither can he depend for his continuance or conservation; having power superiour to all things, as having conferred on them whatever of power they have, nothing can oppose him, or make any prevalent impression upon him, so as to destroy or alter any thing in him.

Also, from his making, his upholding, his governing all things is consequent, that he was ever and is every where: where his power is, there his hand is; for every action with effect requires a conjunction of the agent and patient; nothing can act upon what is distant. That with his presence and power he doth penetrate all things, operating insensibly and imperceptibly, doth argue the spirituality of his being; and that he doth not consist of such matter (so extended, so divisible) as those things do, which we by sense perceive.

His over-reaching wisdom implies him incapable of being deceived; and his over-bearing power signifies that he doth not need to deceive; and his transcendent goodness proves him unwilling to deceive; the like we may say of doing wrong; whence are consequent his perfect veracity and justice.

Lastly, The Excellency of his nature, the Eminency of his wisdom and power; the Abundance of his goodness; as also, his having given being, then preserving it to all things; do infer his rightful title to supreme dominion; and accordingly, that all love, all obedience, all praise and veneration are due to him; according to the devout acknowledgment of those blessed Elders: *Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive the glory and honour and power, (or authority) because thou hast made all things; and for thy will they are and were created.* Apoc. 4. 11.

I Believe in God.

SERMON IX.

THE BEING of GOD

Proved from

Supernatural Effects.

JOHN 5. 17.

But Jesus answered them : my Father hitherto worketh, and I work.

WHEN at first by the divine power this visible Systeme of things was consummated and settled in that course wherein it now stands, it is said that *God rested from all his work which he had made*; the plain meaning of which saying is, that God had so framed all the parts of nature, and several kinds of things, and disposed them into such an order, and inserted into them such principles of action, that thereafter (without

Gen. 2. 2.

¹Εστι δ' ἐν καταπεπαυμένῳ τὸ τιλὶ τὸ ἐν ᾧ γενομένων εἰς πάντα χεῖνον ἀσφαλῶς φυλάσσει τετάχεται, καὶ ἡ παλαιὰ ἀταξία ἐκαστον ᾧ κτισμάτων καταπεπαυμένη. Clem. Alex. St. 6. (pag. 4983.)

Psalms 148. 6. *shall not pass : His word was settled in the heavens, and his faithfulness unto all generations ; they continue this day according to his ordinances : He made a*

&c.

Jer. 5. 22. *covenant with day and night, and appointed the ordinances of heaven and earth.)*
Jer. 33. 25. Thus God rested and ceased from his work of Creation. But it is not said,
31. 36. nor intended, that God did absolutely give over or forbear working; that

Ἀγαθὸς δὲ ὧν εἰ παύσεται πότε ἀγαθὸν ἐργῶν, καὶ τὸ δεῖν εἶναι παύσεται. Clem. Alex. *ibid.*
he with-drew his care, and tied up (as it were) his own hands by a resolution not to intermeddle more with any thing, but to enjoy a kind of Epicurean ease and ἀπεργία. No: his wisdom hath so ordered things, that there should be need and reason of his acting continually; that there should be frequent occasion of variously displaying his glorious attributes; of exercising his power, of demonstrating his goodness. Indeed as to Beings merely natural

tural and unintelligent there were no need of his doing more; for they are all thoroughly *his* obedient *servants*, and exactly fulfil his word; never stragling from the station in which he placed them; never transgressing the rule that he prescribed them: but he hath also made other Beings, by nature incapable of such uniformity and settlement; very free, and therefore very mutable; to the well governing of whom therefore a continual intention and activity is requisite. For the use and Benefit of which Beings as a great part of nature was designed and made by God, so it was not unmeet, that for their sake he should sometime alter the course of nature, and cross or check the stream of things. The fuller and clearer illustration of his glory, the shewing that all things do not pass on in a fatal track; the confirming that he made Nature, because he can command and control it; the demonstration of his especial care over and love toward men, in suspending or thwarting his own established laws and decrees (as it were) for their sake; the exciting men the more to mind God, and impressing on them a respect toward him; the begetting faith in him, and hope in his providence, are fair accounts, for which God sometimes should perform (even in a manner notorious and remarkable to us) actions extraordinary. And that God doth so, we learn in the words I read from the mouth of truth it self; whose affirmation (for persuading the incredulous) I intend to second with particular instances, attested to by reasonable proof; suitable to the nature of the matter; and this with design to infer from such operations (as effects assignable to no other cause) the Existence of God; having endeavoured formerly to deduce the same from the common ordinary works, appearing in both worlds, natural and humane. And as we before distinguished the ordinary works or actions, so here we shall distinguish the extraordinary ones, into two sorts; into those which are above or against the course (or power) of nature; and those, which surmount or cross the stream of humane affairs; such, as being evidenced and granted to have been really performed, either all men will believe, or the wisest men will readily confess the being of such a Cause as we assert.

Psal. 119. 91.
Psal. 148. 2.
Isa. 40. 26.
Psal. 104. 9.
19.

John 9. 3.
Exod. 7. 5.
Deut. 4. 35.
Dan. 4. 25.

I. Let us first consider the first kind: And of these we may generally affirm, that no man can deny many such to have been performed, without giving the lye to the most authentick records of history that are or have been extant; without extremely disparaging the credit of mankind, without impeaching all Nations and all Ages not only of extreme weakness (in credulous assent unto, regarding and relying upon such appearances; which not only the vulgar sort, but even Princes and Statesmen, learned men and Philosophers every-where have done) but of notorious baseness and dishonesty, in devising and reporting them; without indeed derogating utterly from all testimony that can be rendred to any matter of fact, and rendring it wholly insignificant; for that if we may disbelieve these reports, there is no reason we should believe any thing that is told us.

Nostrum quidem, inquit (Socrates) humanum est consilium, sed de rebus & obscuris & incertis ad Apollinem censeo referendum, ad quem etiam Athenienses publice de majoribus rebus semper retulerunt, &c. Cic. de divin. p. 206.

To this kind we may refer the presignification and prediction of future events, especially those which are contingent, and depend upon man's free choice; to the doing of which nothing is more evident in it self, nor more acknowledged by all, than that a power or wisdom supernatural is required; concerning which we have the (not-despicable) consent of all times, continued down from the remotest antiquity, that frequently they have been made: *There is, saith Cicero, an ancient opinion, drawn even from the heroical times (that is from the utmost bounds of time spoken of) that there is among men a certain divination, which the Greeks call prophecy (or inspiration) that is a presension, and knowledge of future things.* And of this kind even prophane story doth afford many instances; there indeed having scarce happened any considerable revolution in state, or action in war, whereof we do not find mention-

Vetus opinio est jam usque ab heroicis ducta temporibus, eaque & populi Romani, & omnium dominum firmata consensu, versari quendam inter homines divinationem; quam Græci μαντιαν appellant, id est presensionem & scientiam rerum futurarum. De Div.

Gentem quidem nullam video neque tam humanam atque doctam, neque tam immanem, tamque barbaram, quæ non significari futura, & à quibusdam intelligi, prædicique posse censeat. Idem.

Ἄλλ' ὅταν ἡμίονοι, &c. Herod. 1.

Ὡς δὲ Σάλαμις, &c. Herod. 7.

Λεύκτροι δὲ μοι σκεδντα μέλει, &c. Paulan. 9. pag. 563.

Collegit innumerabilia oracula Chrysippus, nec ullum sine locuplete auctore, atque teste. De Div. 172.

** Vid. Cic. de Divin. pag. 206. de Nat. Deor. 2. pag. 54.*

- perished) an innumerable store of them, all confirmed by good authority and testimony. I cannot stand to relate many of them particularly, or discuss the validity of relations concerning such instances; I shall only say, that discourse in Tully, concerning the oracle at *Delphos*, which may be extended to the rest of that sort, doth not seem contemptible: *I defend* (saith he) *this one thing; that never would that oracle have been so renowned, nor so stuff'd with the gifts of all Nations and Kings, if every age had not experienced the truth of those oracles; for 'tis hard, that a mere imposture should, to the expence and damage of so many persons, so long continue in credit. I will adjoin but one observation to this purpose, that even among those Pagans, who regarded these things, it was known and acknowledged, that such portending, or predicting future things, although immediatly conveyed by inferiour powers, did originally proceed from the one Supreme God; so the wise Poet implies, when he makes the prophetick Fury say, that she received her prediction from Apollo, and Apollo from the Almighty Father.*

pag. 172.

Defendo unum hoc, nunquam illud oraculum Delphis tam celebre, & tam clarum fuisset, neque tantis donis referatam omnium populorum atque regum, nisi omnis ætas oraculorum illorum veritatem esset experta, &c.

Æneid. 3.

*Accipite ergò animis, atque hæc mea figite dicta,
Quæ Phœbo Pater omnipotens, mihi Phœbus Apollo
Prædixit, vobis Furiarum ego maxima pando;*

Notandum A where *Servius* notes, that *even* Apollo (he who among their Deities was in chief esteem for rendering oracles) is said to derive his knowledge from Jove, or the Sovereign God.

- It seemed not amiss to touch those instances of this kind, which profane Story yields, but the Holy Scriptures afford most evident and eminent ones; some of them extant in Books written and in use long before the events foretold: as that of *Abraham's* concerning his posterity sojourning, and being afflicted in *Egypt* four hundred years; of the Prophet concerning *Josias*, (some hundred years before his birth) that such a Prince should be, and what he should do; of *Isaias* concerning *Cyrus* by name, his conquests, his restoring the *Jews* from exile, his re-edifying *Jerusalem*; of *Jeremiah* concerning the captivity, and its duration for seventy years; of *Daniel* concerning the grand revolutions of Empire in the world, (wherein the achievements of *Alexander*, and his Successors are so plainly described, that *Porphyrus* could not but acknowledge the consonancy of them to the events) of our *Saviour* concerning the siege and destruction of *Jerusalem*; the truth of which reports, although we should allow those Writings which contain them, an authority no greater than humane, there were no reason to question; since most of those Writings were extant a good time before the events specified. Now if but one of these innumerable instances were true, if ever one event hath been presignified or predicted (and 'twere a hard case, that among so many not one should prove so) it sufficiently evinces what we intend.

But

But to our purpose especially do appertain the works usually styled *miraculous*, which exceed or contravene the ordinary course or power of nature; * which therefore all men will readily confess performable only by an agent * John 3. 2. in power or knowledge exceeding their comprehension (such as are, for example, the fire being with-held from burning, and the waters from flowing; the sick being (without medicinal applications) cured of long chronical distempers; limbs being (in the like manner) restored to persons maimed, and senses to them who, from their birth (or otherwise for a long time) had been deprived of their use; restoring the dead to life (a thing which *Pliny* mentions as impossible in his conceit to God himself) and the like; of these, although all Nations have had so many performed among them, as sufficed to breed every where a constant opinion, that a divine power did frequently interpose, so as to control and overbear the force of nature (which opinion could not in likelihood so generally and constantly prevail without any ground at all;) Yet the Holy Scriptures do most fully and clearly testify concerning them to have been in great number performed, for the confirmation of that divine truth and will of God, which they declare him pleased to reveal; for guiding men into, or settling them in right opinions or good practices; for disabusing and withdrawing them from ways of error and vice; for the encouragement and relief of good, or the restraint, discouragement and chastisement of evil men; which in reason are the most proper causes, why by such a Being, as we suppose (so wise, so good) such works should be effected the testimonies concerning which there can be no good reason assigned of refusing, but very great to admit them, as we hope at another time satisfactorily to declare. Indeed God's patefaction of himself, his mind, his will (in many kinds and manners particularly to the Fathers of old, and afterward generally to all the world by his Son; on purpose sent from heaven to publish and accomplish his designs of mercy and favour to all mankind) accompanied with so many prodigious works of power, and so many glorious circumstances of providence conspicuous to all the world, and withal so accommodated as to beget first of all this assurance in us, that a divine power doth exist and preside over all affairs both natural and humane, is an argument which in all honest and well disposed minds (not possessed with false prejudices, nor depraved by vicious inclinations) cannot but obtain effect, the fuller urging and confirming of which I shall refer to another season, when it will serve a more general purpose, even the confirming not only this part, but even the whole of our Religion in gross: I shall only now briefly say concerning them, that considering the works themselves, they were in number so many and various, in kind so great and high; as to the manner of performance so naked and open; (being done in the face, and exposed to the senses of all men) that there could be no reason to suspect any juggling or humane artifice used about them; considering the witnesses that asserted them, they were persons who by their writings, by their behaviour, by the effect of their endeavours approved themselves very intelligent; in their intentions very honest and free from any sinister design, in their conversations very innocent and vertuous, in their attestation very consistent and constant; so that there could be desired no witnesses of any fact better qualified, or more credible than they; considering the design of those works, there could be none more noble and excellent, more worthy of God, more beneficial to man; it being chiefly the confirmation of a doctrine, incomparably the most reasonable and most useful that ever appeared among men; productive of the best fruits, apt (being entertained heartily) to make men highly good and truly happy; to promote the honour of God and the interests of goodness; to secure as much as can be both the publick and private welfare of mankind. Considering which things, we can have no good reason to distrust the performance of such works, by authentick records, by constant tradition attested to us.

Nō Deum quidem posse omnia. Namque nec sibi potest consciscere mortem, nec mortales aeternitate donare, aut revocare defunctos. Nat. Hist. 2. 7.

Φήμην δ' ἔτις
πάντων
ἀπολλύται,
ἥτινα πολ-
λοι
λαοὶ φημίζου-
σι.

I may adjoin to the former sorts of extraordinary actions, some other sorts, the consideration of which (although not so directly and immediately) may serve

serve our main design; those (which the general opinion of mankind hath approved, and manifold testimony hath declared frequently to happen) which concern *apparitions* from another world (as it were) of Beings unusual; concerning spirits haunting persons and places; (these discerned by all senses, and by divers kinds of effects) of which the old world (the ancient Poets and Historians) did speak so much, and of which all Ages have afforded several attestations very direct and plain, and having all advantages imaginable to beget credence. Concerning visions made unto persons of especial eminency and influence (to Priests and Prophets) concerning presignifications of future events by dreams; concerning the power of enchantments, implying the co-operation of invisible powers; concerning all sorts of intercourse and confederacy (formal or virtual) with bad spirits; all which things he that shall affirm to be mere fiction and delusion, must thereby with exceeding immodesty and rudeness charge the world with extreme both vanity and malignity; many (if not all) worthy Historians of much inconsiderateness or fraud; most Lawgivers of great silliness and rashness, most Judicatories of high stupidity or cruelty, a vast number of witnesses of the greatest malice or madness; all which have concurred to assert these matters of fact.

'Tis true, no question, but there have been many vain pretences, many false reports, many unjust accusations, and some undue decisions concerning these matters; that the vulgar sort is apt enough to be abused about them; that even intelligent and considerate men may at a distance, in regard to some of them, be imposed upon: But, as there would be no false gems obtruded, if there were no true ones found in nature; as no counterfeit coin would appear, were there no true one current; so neither can we well suppose that a confidence in some to feign, or a readiness in most to believe stories of this kind could arise, or should subsist without some real ground, or without such things having in gross somewhat of truth and reality. However, that the wiser and more refined sort of men, highest in parts and Improvements both from study and experience (indeed the flower of every Commonwealth, Statesmen, Lawgivers, Judges and Priests) upon so many occasions of great importance, after most deliberate scanning such pretences and reports, should so often suffer themselves to be deluded, to the extreme injury of particular persons concerned, to the common abusing of mankind, to the hazard of their own reputation in point of wisdom and honesty, seems no-wise reasonable to conceive. In likelihood rather the whole kind of all these things, were it altogether vain and groundless, would upon so frequent and so mature discussions, have appeared to be so, and would consequently long since have been disowned, exploded, and thrust out of the world. For, as upon this occasion 'tis said in *Tully, Time wipeth out groundless conceits, but confirms that which is founded in nature, and real.*

*Opinionum
commenta dies
delet, natura
judicia confir-
mat. De Nat.
D. 2. p. 54**

Now if the truth and reality of these things (all, or any of them) inferring the existence of powers invisible; at least inferiour ones, though much superiour to us in all sort of ability, be admitted; it will at least (as removing the chief obstacles of incredulity) confer much to the belief of that supreme Divinity, which our discourse strives to maintain.

I must acknowledge that both these arguments drawn from testimonies concerning matters of fact (and indeed all other arguments) were invalid and insignificant, could any demonstration or any argument weighty enough be brought to shew the impossibility of such a thing to exist, as we infer to exist from them. But, as it is a very easy thing (so whoever is vers'd in speculation and reasoning about things cannot but find) to prove many things possible to be, which do not actually exist; so it is hard to prove the impossibility of a thing's being: Yea there is plainly no other mean of doing this, than the manifesting an evident repugnance between being it self, and some property assigned to that thing, or between several properties attributed thereto; as if we should

suppose a square circle or a round square to exist. But, in our case no man can shew such a repugnance; between being and wisdom, power or goodness, there is no inconsistency surely: nor can any man evince one to be between being

*'Tis not enough to say peremptorily,
'tis nonsense; or that you cannot un-
derstand how it should be; such pro-
ceedings are intolerably both insolent
and vain.*

being and co-existing with matter, or penetrating body; between being and insensibility; between being and any other property which we ascribe to God; nor is there any clashing between those properties themselves; it is therefore impossible to shew that God cannot exist; and therefore it is unreasonable to disbelieve the testimonies (so many, so pregnant) that declare him to exist.

Ἀμύνητοι γὰρ εἰσιν οἱ ἐδὲν ἄλλο οὐκ ἔχοντες εἶδ, ἢ δὲ ἀνδύονται ἀπειξ ταῖς χερσὶν λαβεῖσθαι. Plat. Theat.

Men indeed, who affix themselves to things which their sense offers, may be indisposed to abstract their minds from such things, may be unapt to frame conceptions about any other sort of things; but to think there can be no other things than such as we see and feel, that nothing endued with other properties than such as these objected to our sense have, can exist, implies a great dulness of apprehension, a greater shortness of reason and judgment; 'tis much like the simplicity of a rustick, who because he never was above three miles from home, cannot imagine the world to reach ten miles farther; and will look upon all that is told him concerning things more distant, to be false, and forg'd to abuse him. I add, that these mens incredulity is hence more inexcusable, because the possibility of such a being its existence, the compatibility and concurrence of such properties in one thing, is (as we elsewhere have largely shewed) by a very plain instance declared, even by that Being within every man, which in a degree partakes of all those properties.

—affixit hu-
mi divina
particulam
aura.

I shall leave this head of discourse, with this one remark; that they are much mistaken, who place a kind of wisdom in being very incredulous, and unwilling to assent to any testimony, how full and clear soever: For this indeed is not wisdom, but the worst kind of folly. 'Tis folly, because it causes ignorance and mistake, with all the consequents of these; and 'tis very bad, as being accompanied with dissingenuity, obstinacy, rudeness, uncharitableness, and the like bad dispositions; from which credulity it self, the other extreme sort of folly, is exempt. Compare we, I say, these two sorts of fools, the credulous fool, who yields his assent hastily upon any slight ground; and the suspicious fool, who never will be stirr'd by any the strongest reason or clearest testimony, we shall find the latter in most respects the worst of the two; that his folly ariseth from worse causes, hath worse adjuncts, produceth worse effects. Credulity may spring from an airy complexion, or from a modest opinion of one's self; suspiciousness hath its birth from an earthy temper of body, or from self-conceit in the mind; that carries with it being civil and affable, and apt to correct an error; with this a man is intractable, unwilling to hear, stiff and incorrigible in his ignorance, or mistake: that begets speed and alacrity in action; this renders a man heavy and dumpish, slow and tedious in his resolutions and in his proceedings: both include want of judgment; but this pretending to more thereof, becomes thereby more dangerous. Forward rashness, which is the same with that, may sometimes, like an acute disease, undo a man sooner; but stupid dotage, little differing from this, is (like a chronical distemper) commonly more mischievous, and always more hard to cure. In fine, were men in their other affairs, or in ordinary converse so diffident to plain testimony, as some do seem to be in these matters concerning Religion, they would soon feel great inconveniences to proceed thence; their business would stick, their conversation would be distastful; they would be much more offensive, and no less ridiculous, than the most credulous fool in the World. While men therefore so perversly distrustful affect to seem wise, they affect really to be fools, and practise according to the worst sort of folly.

Thus have I, although very cursorily, considered the first kind of works extraordinary that appear in the world; I proceed briefly to touch the other sort, observable in the transaction of humane affairs; for even in these there do happen things in a sort miraculous, or prodigious; according to reasonable estimation surpassing the common efficacy of humane causes; by which God in a language more express (as it were) and in a louder tone declares his presence and providence here; so that they must be very deaf and stupid, who do not from them learn lessons of piety and reverence toward God; who do not in them hear heaven thundring forth that proclamation to us all: *Discite justitiam moniti.* For instance,

1. We may observe, when any where things are come to such a pass, that iniquity and outrage do extremely prevail, so that the most of mens lives become intolerably grievous, that in such cases often the state of things, how seemingly stable and robust soever, in a manner sudden and strange, by means to appearance small and weak, to be overturned, and reduced to a more tolerable form; no struglings of might, no fetches of policy, no circumspection or industry of man availing to uphold it, an invisible hand checking all such force, and crossing all such devices. *A stone cut out of the mountains without hands* (that is, a slender instrument coming forth out of some remote and secret place, without any considerable influence of human endeavour) *breaking in pieces the iron, and the brass, the clay, the silver and the gold*; there being raised up instantly a *Moses* or a *Maccabæus*, an *Ehud* or a *Gideon*, a *Dion* or a *Timoleon*, by a single stroke, or a sudden impression, to deliver oppressed Nations from slavery.

Dan. 2. 45.

2. How many examples do experience and history afford us of justice and vengeance, in ways for their kind and for their circumstances very remarkable, executed in the face of the world upon persons (such as *Corah* and his fellows, *Sennacherib*, *Herod*, *Brennus*) notoriously wicked and mischievous, who have out-braved heaven by their impiety, or horribly abused mankind by their injustice?

3. Yea we may take notice, that even few of those men, whose actions have been illustrious for greatness void of goodness; who have climbed to height of power and state by the ruines and slaughters of mankind, that, I say, few of such persons have departed off the stage in peace or honour. That *Alexander* was snapt in the flower of his age and glory; that *Cæsar* was no sooner arrived to the top of his fortune, than to the bottom of his life; neither having time allowed them to enjoy (scarce to taste) those fruits which they so eagerly fought and toiled for; both perhaps (one without any peradventure) being speeded away by violent and treacherous hands. Not to mention *Pompey* or *Hannibal*, or other such like men of exorbitant ambition, whose fortunes were so strangely changed, and whose ends were so dismal.

Dan. 4. 17.

Alexand. Phœræus ab uxore occisus. Vid. Plut. in Pelopida, ad fin.

* Of such as Sejanus, Ruffinus, Eutropius, &c. Stilico, &c.

• Psalm 3. 17, 18.

4. We may however observe, that few great Tyrants and Oppressors, few persons insolently profane or sacrilegious, have escaped the visible stroke of divine vengeance; a stroke inflicted in ways not only violent, but shameful; and that usually by means most unexpected, by the hands of their own Guards, their own Servants, their own Favourites, the very Instruments of their mischief, and these stirred up by slight causes, by some little disgrace or disgust received by them from their Master. What a long black *Legend of Caligula's*, *Nero's*, *Domitian's*, *Commodus's*, *Heliogabalus's*, *Maximinus's*, * may any man's observation, even out of profane histories, easily compose, of whom the divine justice in such ways hath rid the world?

5. I might also mention the judgments of God upon Persons and Families raised to wealth and splendour of estate by oppression, fraud, sacrilege, rapine, or such bad means; whose estates without any visible ordinary means do moulder and decay; a secret moth devouring them; a thing which falls under common observation.

6. The same providence hath more clearly discovered it self in the strange detections of murders, and other enormous mischiefs committed in darkness, and revealed by a light unaccountably darted from heaven. Of which kind not only Books, but common experience doth furnish with stories and instances very remarkable both for number and weight.

Eccles. 10. 20.
Heb. 2. 10.

Psalm 64. 5, 7.

7. The like strange discoveries of Plots contrived secretly against the publick peace, and against the lives of Princes, frequently offer themselves in story, and the like experience suggests concerning private men; *a bird of the air carrying the voice* of the wicked traitour to the ears of him who is designed against; *the stones of the wall crying out* treason and murder. Yea generally, according to the *Psalmist's* observation, when men have encouraged themselves in an evil matter, and have communed about laying snares privily, — saying who shall

shall see them—God doth shoot at them with an arrow, suddenly they are wounded. So that all men have reason (as he adds they will do) to fear, and to declare the work of God; if they wisely consider his doing: and himself had reason to pronounce in another place: *The Lord is known by the judgment that he executeth; the wicked is snared in the work of his own hands.* Pſal. 9. 16.

8. I might adjoin the remarkable providences which also occur concerning the recompences and encouragements of vertue; in the protecting good men from imminent dangers, delivering them from grievous straits, supplying them in extreme needs, prospering them in their undertakings, raising them (as *Joseph, David, Daniel, &c.*) by wonderful means to wealth and dignity; for their own encouragement, or for publick benefit; concerning which occurrences the *Psalmist* had reason to say, *whoso is wise will observe these things*; Pſal. 107. 43: *and they shall understand the loving kindness of the Lord.*

Pſal. 37. 25. *I have been young and now am old, yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken.*—

These considerations (with divers others of the same kind) grounded on providence, I must confess have not, singly taken, the greatest force and evidence to infer our purpose, nor can they with the same assurance and peremptoriness be urged to every adversary or disbeliever, as some other arguments may; those (which we have formerly insisted on) drawn from nature. For in nature, all causes there being themselves destitute of immediate reason or choice, and subject to no chance or contingency (properly so called) we may indeed confidently ascribe all effects, in which any reason or counsel doth appear (whether ordinary or extraordinary) to divine efficacy; there being no other cause, to which we can reasonably impute them; but in humane affairs, seeing man is an understanding and free agent, and few effects happen without some act of his inter-vening, there can hardly occur any passage (how rare and strange soever) which our incredulous Adversaries (with some kind of colour or plausible shift) will not be ready to attribute unto some reach of man's wit, or to some capricio of his humour, or to some unaccountable casualty, incident to matters of this kind (as we see the *Philistines* were apt to impute the plague of *Emerods* to chance; the *Israelites* did presently charge that terrible judgment on *Corah* and his complices upon *Moses* and *Aaron*.) And commonly divine and humane influences upon these effects (even as in nature the influences of heaven, and of inferiour particular causes) are so complicated and interwoven together, that it is not so easy to distinguish the one from the other, either in whole or in part, to separate the bounds of providence ordinary and extraordinary, to discern what God performs by usual instruments, what by his immediate hand. As also the actions of the wisest men are often grounded upon reasons remote from, and impenetrable by vulgar conceit; so are the reasons of God's proceedings with men various and often mysterious; above the reach of our capacity with distinction to apprehend them (as who for instance can often-times readily distinguish between God's merciful patience toward bad men, and his gracious recompencing the good; between God's just vengeance on the one sort, and his fatherly correction of the other; between his reclaiming one from vice either (as particular circumstances require) by adverse or prosperous events, and his trying or exercising the others vertue by the like proceedings? who can distinguish between what is performed or permitted upon general, or upon particular accounts; in respect to the publick, or in regard to private men; in relation to present times, or to posterity; upon absolute and immediate accounts, or in order to some farther, more remote designs? who I say can pretend skill enough to define what, or how much is best to be done in these cases; when it is fit to allow men to proceed in the use of their freedom, when to interrupt them? who, but he that exactly knows the limits of just and fit, the qualities and tempers of men, the state and circumstances of every thing?

Vid. Claud. in Ruffin. lib. 1. init. *elegantior hac de re differentem.*

Sen. de Provid. init.

1 Sam. 6. 9. Numb. 16. 41.

I add, that God's governance of things hath no complete issue here; that this is not the only, nor the chief place of dispensing rewards and punishments; that things are but doing here, and not done; in a progress and tendency toward somewhat beyond, not in a state of final resolution or perfection;

wherefore as we cannot fully judge of an artificial work by its first draughts, nor of a Poem by some scenes, but must stay till all is finished and acted through, so we cannot so clearly discern the entire wisdom and justice of divine dispensations here; not till that day, when (as St. Paul tells us) God's *diagnose iustiz* (his righteous judgment) shall be made apparent. Whence discourse grounded upon present events may not prove so convincing or satisfactory, except unto the children of wisdom, who by a sharper sense can discover even the smaller lines and more occult tracts of God's hand; who with an especial attention and sagacity do (as the Prophet expresseth it) *regard the works of the Lord, and consider the operations of his hands*. However the frequent occurrences in humane affairs of passages (such as we mentioned) so rare and remarkable, if they do not (singly and solitarily taken) thoroughly serve to demonstrate the *Hypothesis* of divine Providence; yet at least they do much favour and strengthen it, being very congruous thereto. Supposing such a Providence, 'tis most probable (I may say necessary) that such events would happen; whence there can be no absurdity in ascribing them thereto, but much of reason in doing it. They are *digni vindice nodi*, difficulties not otherwise easily resolved, and therefore God may be most fitly introduced, as the most probable cause of them; if strict discourse cannot compel us, yet ingenuity will incline us, and wisdom will oblige us to do so: *They that are wise will consider these things, and they shall understand the loving kindness* (I add, and also both the wisdom and power) *of the Lord. A brutish man knoweth not, neither doth a fool understand this* (saith the Psalmist, concerning the proceedings of providence.)

But however general providence doth work in convincing some, particular providence will at least produce that effect in many: For I dare appeal to most men (to those especially, who have ever had any fear of God, or sense of goodness in them) if sometime or other, in their lives, they have not in their pressing needs and straits (especially upon their addresses to God for help) found help and comfort conveyed unto them by an insensible hand; if they have not sometimes in a manner unaccountable escaped imminent dangers; if they have not in the performance of their duty and devotion toward God experienced a comfort more than ordinary; if they cannot to some events of their life aptly apply those observations of the Psalmist; *This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and delivered him out of his troubles: The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them: O taste and see that the Lord is good: O taste and see.* He appeals to experience; he supposes the divine goodness may be seen, and felt; that surely will be a most efficacious argument of God's existence and providence. And so it is indeed to all good men (for whose comfort and confirmation it is chiefly mentioned;) though it is not likely to have much influence upon them, who have alienated themselves from God, and driven him out of their thoughts; except they should (beyond what can be expected from them) be so civil and candid, as to believe the testimony of others, who assert this great truth unto them from their own inward conscience and experience.

But let thus much serve, at present, for the shewing that God doth (as our Lord tells us) *hitherto work*; and consequently (as we thence meant to infer) that God doth exist.

The Father.

SERMON X.

I believe in GOD

THE

FATHER.

EPHES: IV. 6.

One God and Father of all.

I Have formerly discoursed concerning the nature of that Belief which we here profess: I did also endeavour by several Arguments to evince the truth and credibility of the first Article of our Creed (which is indeed the foundation of all the rest, and of all Religion) *That there is one God.* I proceed to the following parts.

THE FATHER. The Appellation of God not improperly taken (as when it is attributed to creatures, upon some resemblance in nature or office which they bear to the supreme God) but relating to him who only, truly and properly is styled God, is sometimes put absolutely, sometime hath a relative apposition going along with it. Being absolutely or singly put, it sometimes refers by way of eminency particularly to the First Person in the blessed and glorious Trinity; as when Christ is called the *Son of God*; when God is put in distinction from the other Persons (when for instance it is said, *That they may know thee the only true God, and whom thou hast sent, Jesus Christ. Blessed be God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. The Word was with God. To serve the living and true God, and to wait for his son from heaven:* and in that form of Blessing, *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all*) but commonly it is to be understood for God essentially considered (according to the Divine Essence common to all Three Persons) to whom in that respect all the Divine Attributes agree, and from whom all divine operations (*absolutè & ad extra*) do jointly proceed. And to this sense or notion we have hitherto supposed that the name of God might be here applied. For, that there is one God, having such essential attributes, is the first principle and foundation of all Religion, which we must therefore suppose, if not directly expressed, yet at least sufficiently implied in the *Creed*:

And supposing the word doth in part imply this sense, the attribute or title of Father doth upon many accounts truly and properly belong to God (God absolute and essential) in relation to all things generally, and to some things particularly; especially, which is the most fruitful consideration, in respect to our selves.

Let us first consider the accounts upon which, then the terms (or objects) in relation to which God is so called; then let us apply the consideration to practice.

One God and Father of all.

Every attribute, every title, every relation of God doth ground an obligation, doth afford an inducement to good practice; but none other doth ground higher obligation, or yieldeth stronger inducement to all kinds of obedience, than doth this of *Father*, which here, and frequently elsewhere in Holy Scripture is ascribed to God: unto which purpose, of exciting us to good practice (to all good practice generally, and particularly to some kinds thereof) I do now intend to apply the consideration thereof; but *first* let us consider in what respects, or upon what grounds this title is attributed to God; then let us reflect somewhat upon the term, in respect to which God is styled *Father of all*, that is, in a larger sense of all things, in a stricter sense of all persons, in the most restrained sense of all us Christians.

The title of *Father* is upon several accounts commonly given to things; one is causality; for the efficient cause, or author of any thing, is called its father; any work is said to be the child, or off-spring, of him that maketh or inventeth it: *Hath the rain a father?* (or, who is father of the rain, as the LXX render it) *or who hath begotten the drops of the dew?* saith God in *Job*. Another ground thereof is sustenance or preservation; so *Job* saith of himself, that *he was a father to the poor and fatherless*, because he yielded them protection and relief: so *Roma patrem patriæ Ciceronem libera dixit*, Rome called *Cicero* father, because he preserved it from the attempts of wicked conspirators against its liberty and safety: education also and instruction entitle to this name; whence Saint *Paul* calleth *Timothy* and *Philemon*, the *Corinthians* and *Galatians*, whom he had instructed in the Christian Faith, his *children*: lastly governance, attended with beneficent affection and care, doth found this appellation; whence Princes are usually styled the *Fathers of their country*, being supposed to desire, and to provide for the publick good; so we have the *Fathers of tribes*, that is, the principal persons of them, who did preside over them: I do omit antiquity, and age, for which we know that persons are vulgarly called *Fathers*.

Upon all these accounts it is plain that the title of Universal Father may truly be ascribed unto God, especially in respect to our selves, who may be considered as equivalent to all other objects, as comprehending in us somewhat common to them all: God in some of those respects is the Father of all things, or of us as Beings; God is more especially the Father of intelligent Beings, and of us as such: God is the Father of all men, of all good men, and peculiarly of Christians; which respects all of them do, or should concur in us: Let us survey those particulars somewhat distinctly, then apply them as obligations and inducements to good practice.

1. God is the Father of all things, or of us as creatures; as the efficient cause and creatour of them all: *He made the world* (as *St. Paul* telleth the *Athenians*) *and all things therein*. *He commanded* (saith the *Psalmist*) *and they were created: The world and the fulness thereof* (that is, all wherewith it is replenished, and which it contains) *he hath founded them*. *All these things* (saith God in the Prophet) *hath mine hand made*: and *παντὸς τοῦ κόσμου ὁ πατήρ*, the maker and father of the universe, even *Plato* styleth God. God is also the Father of all things, because he preserveth and sustaineth them by his power: *He* (saith the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews*) *beareth up all things by the word of his power: He* (saith the *Psalmist*) *hath established them for ever and ever; he made a decree which shall not pass*, by virtue of which they subsist: also because he by a continual care doth provide for them; *they all* (saith the *Psalmist*) *wait upon him, that he may give them their meat in due season; what*

he giveth them, they gather; he openeth his hand, they are filled with good: Isa. 40. 26. He also governeth, and containeth them in good order; for, his kingdom *re-^{103. 19. 135.}* kith over all; and, whatsoever the Lord pleaseth, that doeth he in heaven and earth: all this he doeth with goodness and affection; for, his tender mercies ^{6. 147. 15.} are over all his works: whence even among Pagans the word *Pater* absolutely put did signifie the Supreme God, they understanding thereby the Author, Preserver and Governour of all things, and *Pater omnipotens* is the periphrasis, whereby the wisest Poet doth usually express God.

— *o Pater, & Rex Jupiter* — Hor.

Serm. 2. 1.

— *Pater ipse colendi Haud facilem esse viam voluit.* Georg.

Zeū πάτερ ἡμέτερος ἑορίδην, ὕπαρ
κρείοντων.

2. More especially God is the Father of intellectual Beings; he is styled * the father of spirits; particularly the Angels in way of excellency are called * Heb. 12. 9. the sons of God: † There was a day when the sons of God came to present them- Numb. 16. 22. selves before the Lord: and, When the morning stars sang together, and all the † Job 1. 6. sons of God shouted for joy; in which place of Job the LXX have ἀγγελοι μίς, † Job 38. 7. my Angels; (although perhaps there all God's creatures may be understood † n 89. 6. rejoycing and exulting, as it were, in their being, newly by the goodness of their maker conferr'd on them:) again, Who (saith the Psalmist) in heaven can be compared unto the Lord? who among the sons of the mighty can be likened unto the Lord? the sons of the mighty, it is in the Hebrew, the sons of God, and so the LXX render it; and what precedeth, who in heaven, doth make it, as it seems, best interpretable of the Angels? Of such Beings God is more especially the Father, because he did produce them in a more excellent manner; for other things he made as it were by his hand, these he breathed out of his mouth; as it is said of Adam; when God infused his soul into his body; that God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; because they more Gen. 2: nearly resemble God in their nature and properties (in spirituality, and independence upon matter; in life, and self-moving; in immortality, and perpetuity of being; in understanding, and wisdom; in will, and goodness, or in a capacity at least of such perfections) because also he ruleth them in a nobler way; a way, not of blind and constrained obedience, but of wise and free choice, according to laws of justice, by obligations of ingenuity; because he likewise beareth a more dear affection unto them, and a peculiar care over them: in respect to these Beings indeed the relation of Father is more proper, because they only can be sensible thereof, and capable to render the Psal. 103. 20. duties of piety, gratitude and willing obedience suitable thereto; Rational Beings (saith an Ethnick Philosopher) are the sons of God, because they only are naturally fit to converse with God, being conjoynd to him by participation of Reason: And thus indeed even the Pagan Theologers commonly, from primitive general Tradition we may suppose, did conceive the Supreme God to be the Father of the gods, (intending not such gods as were of man's devising, creatures deify'd by the flattery or fondness of the vulgar, but of higher rank, answering to our Angels, whom they supposed as to approach in excellency of nature nearest to God, so to have derived their being from him, and to attend constantly upon him, partaking of his glory, and observing his pleasure) whence *Divum pater, Father of the Gods*, is a common periphrasis, or title of God among them; and particularly in the *Timæus* of Plato there is an Oration, which he representeth God making unto those creatures, presently upon their creation, beginning thus; O ye chief Gods, of whom I am the framer and father — concerning which gods that which he ἐγὼ δημιουργ- can say, he pretendeth to deduce from ancient original Tradition: But to γὸς πατήστε- come nearer to our more particular concernment;

3. God is the Father, in a more especial manner, of mankind; Have we Mal. 2. 10. not (saith the Prophet) one Father, hath not one God created us? and Adam Luke 3. 38. is called the son of God, the genealogy of all men terminating in him; and, Acts 17. 29. we are all God's off-spring, saith St. Paul: we are so, for that his hands made Job 10. 8. and fashioned our bodies; and for that he formed our spirit within us, as the Pro- Psal. 139. phet speaketh. He made us after his own image, so as signally to represent 15. 16. and resemble himself, in properties of nature, and in eminence of condition; Zech. 12. 1. in Psal. 33. 15. Gen. 1. 27.

in this great Family of visible creatures he hath assigned unto us the principal station, so that other creatures there are but as servants waiting on us, we are as children, depending only on him; he hath shewed an especial tenderness of affection and good will toward us, in providing for us all manner of needful sustenance and comfortable accommodation; continually watching over us for our good, and *holding us up* (as the *Psalmist* speaketh) *from our mothers womb*; bestowing on us good education (instructing us by the light of nature, or dictates of natural reason and conscience, by civil conversation, by the precepts of wise men, and examples of vertuous persons, by providential encouragements of good, and determents from evil; together with the secret whispers, advices and motions of his grace) bearing with excessive patience our infirmities, miscarriages and offences; using seasonable and moderate chastisements to reclaim us from bad courses to those, which our duty, and our advantage do require: In short all God's dealings and demeanour toward mankind do argue in him a paternal regard thereto: whence even the blind *Heathens* discerned and acknowledged this general relation of God to men; and, *Gentis humanæ pater, atque custos* (*O Father, and keeper of mankind*) was an invocation suitable to their notion concerning him: from him they deduced our original; to him they ascribed the formation of our bodies, so full of wonderful artifice; from him they affirm our souls to be extracted; from his goodness and care they supposed all the conveniencies of life which we enjoy to be deriv'd; they conceived him to bear a kind affection unto man, and to have a constant care over him; as by many express testimonies might be shewed, and from their practices evidently may be inferred.

4. Farther yet more especially God is the Father of all good men; such a relation being yet built upon higher grounds and respects; for as *good* they have another original from him; virtue springeth in their hearts from a heavenly seed; that emendation and perfection of nature is produced by his grace, enlightning and quickning them: they are images of him, resembling him in judgment and disposition of mind, in will and purpose, in action and behaviour; the which resemblances do argue them to be the sons of God, and indeed do constitute them such; for, *Love your enemies* (saith our Lord) *blest those that curse you, do good to those that hate you; — that you may be the sons of your father in heaven*; and, *Love your enemies, and do good; and lend expecting nothing thence, and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the sons of the most high*; imitation of God in goodness and beneficence doth we see found a filial relation unto God: To such God answerably doth bear a paternal kindness and compassion; for, *Like as a father pitieth his children, so* (saith the *Psalmist*) *the Lord pitieth them that fear him*. He in all respects dealeth with them as with his children; *ὡς υἱὸς πατρίδας*, as the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews* speaketh: He teacheth, and guideth them with wholesome advice upon all occasions; for, *What man is he that feareth the Lord? him shall he teach in the way that he shall chuse*; and, *The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord*; He gently removeth and correcteth them; *Whom* (saith the *Wife-man*) *God loveth, he correcteth, even as a father the son, in whom he delighteth*: He maintaineth them with all needful sustenance and accommodation without their care or trouble; for, *Take no care*, saith our *Saviour*, *saying, what shall we eat, or what shall we drink, or wherewithal shall we be clothed — for your heavenly father knoweth that ye have need of all these things*; he so knoweth and considereth it, as to provide, that *there shall not be* (as the *Psalmist* affirmeth) *any want unto them that fear him*: He protecteth them from all danger, supporteth them in all distress, and rescueth them from all mischief; for, *His eyes are upon the righteous — to deliver his soul from death, and to keep him alive in famine*; he keepeth all his bones so that none of them is broken — though he fall, he shall not utterly be cast down, for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand; *Many are his afflictions, but the Lord delivereth him out of all*: Such paternal affections doth God bear, such paternal acts doth he exercise toward good men; the which even *Pagan Wile-*

men did apprehend; of whom one thus expresseth himself; God (saith he) *hath* Patrium habet *a fatherly mind toward good men, and strongly loveth them — between them* Deus adversus *and God there is a friendship, which vertue doth conciliate; a friendship do I* bonos viros a- *say, yea a kindred, and similitude; for that a good man is God's disciple and* nimum, & illos *imitatour, and his true off-spring, whom that magnificent father, no softly ex-* fortiter amat, *acter of vertue, doth after the manner of severe parents, educate hardly.* &c.

5. We may farther observe, that God in his proceedings with men, whereby he particularly designeth to contain them within bounds of duty, and thereby to lead them unto happiness, delighteth to represent himself under this obliging and endearing relation: thus he did in regard to his ancient people upon all occasions express himself: *who are Israelites, whose is the* Rom. 9. 4. *adoption, saith St. Paul, reckoning this as the first of those privileges, which appertain to the Jews: It was the commission to Moses: Thou shalt say un-* Exod. 4. 22. *to Pharaoh; thus saith the Lord, Israel is my Son, even my first born; and I say unto thee; let my Son go, that he may serve me; Moses also foreseeing how that people would misbehave themselves, doth thus in God's name expostulate with them: Do you thus requite the Lord, O foolish people, and unwise? Deut. 32. 6.* *is not he thy father, that bought thee? hath he not made thee, and established thee? of the rock that begat thee, thou art unmindful, and hast forgotten God, that formed thee. David also thus addresseth himself to God in their behalf; Blessed be thou, Lord God of Israel, our Father, for ever, and ever; thine O* 2 Chr. 29. 10. *Lord is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the Majesty: and, Doubtless, (saith Esay) thou art our Father, though Abraham* Isa. 63. 16. *be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not; thou O Lord, art our father,* 44. 2, 24. *our redeemer, thy name is from everlasting: and I am (saith God in Jeremy)* Jer. 31. 9, 20. *a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my first-born; Is Ephraim my dear son, is he a pleasant child? he is; the LXX render it, in way of assertion, not of in-*
terrogation.

6. But in the Christian dispensation God more signally representeth himself in this quality and notion. God herein treateth us not so much, as our Lord and Master, with imperious rigour and awfulness, as our Father, with most gracious condescension, and allurements of kindness: *Our Lord (the only* Heb. 2. 11. *Son of God, in a sense infinitely most peculiar and high) was not (saith the* John 20. 17. *Apostle) ashamed to call us brethren; Go (said our Lord, for instance of that gracious condescension) to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and to your Father; both my God, and your God: And such are the advantages peculiar to Christians, grounding this relation toward them, that St. Paul comparing our state in regard to God with that of the Jews, doth thus infer: So that thou, (O Christian) art not now a servant, but a son: Gal. 4. 7.* So it is asserted, and accordingly (which is worth our while distinctly to observe) all the performances of God toward us, and in our behalf are of such a nature, and are set out in such terms as do ground and import this relation: for

1. The reception of a believer into the participation of the privileges and advantages which Christianity tendreth, is termed *υιοθεσία*, the making him Gal. 4. 5. *a Son; the adopting him into God's family, the conferring upon him the ti-* Ep. 1. 5. 2. 19. *tle and quality of God's child; together with the internal disposition of mind,* Rom. 8. 15. *and the liberty of access and intercourse, which do sute that relation: Who-* John 1. 12. *soever (saith St. John) did receive him, to them he gave the power (or pri-* Gal. 3. 26. *ilege) to become the sons of God, even to them, who believed in his name: and, Ye are all (saith St. Paul) the sons of God by faith in Christ Jesus; Gal. 3. 26.* that is, by sincerely embracing Christianity. And, Behold (saith St. John 1 John 3. 1. *again) what manner of love the father hath given us, that we should be cal-* (Eph. 3. 15.) *led the sons of God. And, Ye have not received the spirit of servitude unto* Rom. 8. 15. *fear, but ye have received the spirit of adoption, by which we cry Abba, fa-* Gal. 4. 6. *ther; that is, by which in our prayers with humble affection we freely, confidently and readily according to our Saviour's institution do say, Our*
father.

2. That renovation of our nature, and qualifying our minds as the Gospel prescribeth and requireth, is called regeneration, a new creation, a new birth,

John 3. 3. birth, the begetting a new man within us: *If a man be not born from above*
 1 John 3. 9. *he cannot see the kingdom of God*, that is, he cannot be a good Christian: *whoever is begot of God doth not sin*; that is, good Christians do not live in a course of disobedience: *We are ἀντὶς ποίησις*, God's work, or production, being created in Christ Jesus to good works: *Ye have been taught* — *to put on the new man, that is created according to the image of God in righteousness, and true holiness*; in such terms is the effect of the Christian dispensation upon our hearts and lives described; and that with the greatest reason; for no act of God toward us can be more fatherly, than working in us by his grace the principles of Christian life, and the practices springing from it; nothing doth nearer advance us to a similitude with God, and a participation of the divine nature; nothing doth conciliate from God a more tender affection to us, or worketh in us a more dutiful affection toward him, answerable to this relation, than doth a hearty compliance with the grace of the Gospel.

4. The resurrection of good Christians after death to a better state of life; their entering into immortal bliss and glory, is worthily styled *παλιγγενεσία*, a being generated and born again; whereby they receive from God another more excellent life and state of being, more like and conformable to God: 1 John 3. 2. *for, we know* (saith St. John) *that if he shall appear* (or, that when he shall appear, as some Copies read it) *we shall be like him*; and, As (saith St. Paul) *we have born the image of the earthly (Adam,) we shall also bear the image of the heavenly*: *We shall* (saith he) *be metamorphosed, or transfigured into the same image*: and, *They* (saith our Saviour) *which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection of the dead* — *are the sons of God, being the sons of the resurrection*: that state of bliss is therefore styled a portion or inheritance, allotted to sons, and consequent upon such a relation: *If sons, saith St. Paul, then heirs; heirs of God, and co-heirs with Christ, receiving the reward, and promise of an eternal inheritance*: *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ* (saith St. Peter) *who according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away reserved in heaven for us*.

4. I might adjoin, that Christian men do become the sons of God by the intervention of our Saviour, assuming our nature, and conforming himself to the likeness of men; whereby he becomes *the first-born of many brethren*: Phil. 2. 7. *God* (saith St. Paul) *sent forth his son, born of a woman, that we might receive the privilege of being made sons*: and, *Children* (saith the Apostle to the Hebrews) *partake of flesh and blood*; whence (as he meaneth to infer) our Lord being the Son of God, we upon conjunction of nature with him, and as his brethren, become also such; he farther intimateth, that upon this score we do surpass Angels themselves; for that *He took not on him the nature of angels, but took on him the seed of Abraham*; they were not, as we, dignified with a fraternal relation to the Son of God.

In so many several respects is God our Father; we are his children as being his creatures, made, preserved and maintained by him; as we are intellectual creatures, being placed in degree and quality of nature so near him; as we by virtue and goodness (produced in us by his grace) do any wise approach him, resemble him, and partake of his special favour; as we are Christians, adopted into his heavenly family, renewed by his holy grace, and destinated to a participation of his eternal glory.

Now the consideration of these grounds (each one of them, and all of them together) upon which this relation of God unto us is founded, hath manifold good uses; It is apt to inform and admonish us concerning many necessary duties resulting from it; and to enforce upon us the practice of them.

1. It in general may teach, and should mind us what reverence, honour and observance is due from us unto God, in equity and justice, according to ingenuity and gratitude: *If* (saith God in the Prophet) *I be a father, where is my honour?* Our believing, and acknowledging this relation is vain, if we do not yield the respects, and perform the duties answerable thereto. And

if indeed we are obliged to love, to respect, to observe those, who have been the instruments of God in producing, in nourishing, in breeding us, how much more are we bound to yield the same to him, who principally did, who continually doth bestow upon us our being together with all the supports, the conveniences, the comforts thereof; from whose free bounty we derive not only the benefits of this transitory life, but the inestimable privileges and blessings relating to the future incomparably better state? If we neglect our duty so grounded, may not God justly expostulate with us, as he did of old with those children of his: *Do ye thus requite the Lord, O foolish people, and unwise: Is he not thy father, who bought thee?* (or rather, who got thee, *ὃς ἐκτήσατο σε*, saith the Greek; and both that and the Hebrew do agree in expression of that thing with our common manner of speech) *hath not he made thee, and established thee?* it is, as is there intimated, a part of extreme folly no less than of injustice and ingratitude to dis-regard and disobey him, to whom by such bands of duty and obligation we are allied: Indeed the excellency of God's nature doth justly require honour and reverence to him; his sovereign power may also reasonably extort obedience from us, but his paternal benevolence and beneficence are the most obliging grounds, the most kindly inducements to the practice of all piety toward him; we are foolishly unworthy in not being good on the other accounts, in not being so for these reasons we are monstrously base.

2. This consideration may instruct and admonish us what we should be, and how we should behave our selves; for that if we be God's children, it becometh us, and we are obliged in our disposition and demeanour to resemble, to imitate him: it is natural, and proper for children to resemble their parents in their complexion and countenance; to imitate them in their actions and carriage: *If ye (argueth our Lord) were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham;* ye would imitate him in readily believing and obeying God: and, *Ye (saith he again) are of your father the Devil, because ye perform the lusts of your father;* because in his envious, treacherous, murderous disposition and practice ye resemble him: So if we be God's children, we must, according to St. Paul's exhortation; *imitate God, as dear children;* we must in all imitable perfections strive to be like him; so doth the Scripture frequently (both in general, and as to particular cases or matters) apply and inculcate this point; God is holy, and pure, so therefore ought we to be; *As obedient children (saith St. Peter) not fashioning your selves according to the former lusts in your ignorance, but as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation:* and, *That (saith St. Paul) ye may be blameless, and harmless, the sons of God without rebuke (or irreprehensible sons of God) in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation:* and, *Beloved, now are we sons of God,* saith St. John subjoining — *And every one that hath this hope (a hope grounded upon, or springing from such a relation) purifieth himself, as God is pure:* God is perfectly just, and righteous, thence we likewise should labour to be such; for, *Every one (saith St. John) that doeth righteousness, is righteous, as he is righteous:* God is perfect in all goodness; so must we endeavour to be, as our Saviour enjoineth us: *Be ye (saith he) therefore perfect as your Father is perfect:* God is bountiful, gracious and merciful unto all, we thence should learn to be so also; *I say unto you (they are our Saviour's lessons to us) love your enemies, bless those that curse you, do good to those that hate you, and pray for those who despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your father, which is in heaven; for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil, and on the good; and sendeth rain on the just, and on the unjust:* and again; *Love your enemies, do good, and lend hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the highest; for he is kind to the unthankful, and to the evil; be ye therefore merciful, as your father also is merciful.* So are we admonished, by the holy Writers, of our engagements to be good on this account: and reason indeed sheweth this relation to be inconsistent with our being otherwise; for similitude only can preserve cognation; things very unlike become formally different in kind and nature thereby; diversity of man-

ners signify a difference in blood : if therefore we be closely affixed to material things, or pronely addicted to brutish pleasures, how can we be the children of him that is purely spiritual, altogether intellectual ? if we be fierce, hard-hearted, unmerciful or uncharitable, how can we claim kindred with him, who is all love and benignity, all munificence and mercy ? there can be no affinity in relation, where there is such a dissimilitude in nature. God also cannot deal with us as children, cannot affect or like us, if we do not resemble him ; he can only love good men, and the most certain *κεκτημενον* (the most perfect Rule the most evident mark) by which we can discern or distinguish what goodness is, is conformity to God's nature, discover'd by his actions ; for that cannot otherwise than be very good, wise and reasonable, comely and commendable, convenient and beneficial to us, wherein we resemble God. God's example cannot misguide us, his law and his practice ever consent, his will and nature cannot disagree ; nothing therefore can more please him than

Τὸς θεοῖς φίλη, καὶ ἀγαπᾶσθαι θεῶν ; μία, καὶ ἓνα ἔχουσα ἀρχαίων λόγον, ὅτι τῷ ὁμοίῳ τὸ ὁμοίον φίλον ἐστὶν. Plato de Leg. 4.

what is like him, as even *Plato* could observe : *What practice* (saith he) *is acceptable and suitable to God ? One ; even that, which the Old saying implies, Like is ever a friend to like.* Nothing likewise is more certainly bad, or

more displeasing to God, than that which rendreth us in our complexion of mind, or in our behaviour, unlike to God : we by being such, or doing so, must necessarily fall from this high dignity, must *ipso facto* forfeit this excellent privilege of being thus related to God ; we thereby become exiles and aliens from his name and family ; we prove rebels and foes instead of sons and friends unto him.

3. This consideration may raise us to a just regard, esteem and valuation of our selves, may consequently inspire noble thoughts, and breed generous inclinations in us ; may withdraw us from mean, base and unworthy designs or practices ; may excite and encourage us to handsome, brave, worthy resolutions and undertakings, suitable to the dignity of our nature, the nobleness of our descent, the eminency of so high a relation, of so near an alliance to God : Even natural light dictateth this use of the notion, and Heathen Philosophers do apply it : *If any one* (saith *Epicetus*) *could be affected with this opinion, that we are all originally descended from God, and that God is both the father of men and gods, he would not, I suppose, conceive any thing ignoble or mean concerning himself. If Cæsar should adopt thee, none could endure thy superciliousness ; and if thou knowest that thou art God's son, shall it not elevate thy mind ?* So that great Philosopher discourseth : • and *St. Austin* relateth this discourse of *Varro*, the most learned Roman of his time : *It is, said he, useful for Cities, that valiant men should (although it be false) believe themselves born of the gods, that their minds thence bearing a confidence of their divine extraction, may more boldly undertake great enterprizes, pursue them more earnestly, and hence accomplish them more happily, from the security this conceit produceth :* Shall we then, who in so many respects are so highly born, and of so illustrious an extraction (we that are allied to God by our intelligent nature, that are by the heavenly seed of Christian regeneration more deeply implanted into his stock) so far debase our selves, as to affect and pursue trivial, abject, dishonourable things ? are we not ashamed of so vile a degeneracy ? can we dare so to disparage our high relations ? God our heavenly father, Christ our elder brother ; the holy Angels, and blessed Saints, our kindred in nature, our brethren in grace ? shall we not be afraid for such unworthiness to be degraded, to be rejected, to be disinherited by our holy Father ; who is jealous of his honour, who cannot brook to have his blood so stained and defiled, or that such blots and disgraces should stick to his lineage ; that his image impressed on us should be so deformed and disfigured ; that such disorders and misbehaviours should be committed in his Family ? If we do not behave our selves as children, he hath declared that he will disavow and cast us off from being so : *Every plant* (our Saviour telleth us) *that beareth not good fruit, he loppeth it from his stock, and casteth it away.*

4. This consideration is an especial motive to humility, apt to depress vain conceit and confidence in our selves : for, if we are God's children, so as to have received our

our beings, all our powers and abilities, all our goods and wealth, both internal and external, both natural and spiritual, from his free disposal, so as to be continually preserved and maintained by his providence, to depend for all our subsistence upon his care and bounty; what reason can we have to assume or ascribe any thing to our selves? how vain is it to rely upon any strength or wisdom, any possession or endowment we have, or seem to have? how extremely fond are we if we be raised in our conceit, or are ambitious of reputation upon the score of any such things? for, *Who* (as the *Apostle* invincibly 1 Cor. 4. 7. discourseth) *made thee to differ? what hast thou that thou didst not receive? and if thou hast received it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?* To him alone, who is the Authour and Donour of all good things, to the fountain of all power, all joy, all blessings, to *the father of lights, from whom every good and perfect gift descendeth*; all praise and glory is due. Jam. 1. 17. John 3. 27. 1 Chron. 29. 14, 15.

5. This consideration sheweth us the reason we have to submit intirely to the providence of God, with contentedness and acquiescence in every condition: for seeing we are *God's possessions* (*θεῶν κτήματα*, as *Plato* calleth us) Plat. in Phaed. having made us whatever we are, according to all accounts and capacities, whether as men by his common providence, or as Christians by his especial grace; he surely hath the best right and title that can be upon us; he may justly dispose of us, and use us as he thinks good: We may well thence be obliged according to the Apostolical precept, *to glorify God in our body, and in our spirit, which are God's*. 1 Cor. 6. 20. If we repine at, or complain of God's dealing with us; may he not justly return to us that answer in the Gospel, *Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own?* Matt. 20. 15. Shall we not suffer God to order his own family according to his discretion and pleasure; to assign what station, to allow what portion he pleaseth to his own children, without our offence or displeasure? Shall we pretend to know better than he what is fit to be done? shall we claim a right to dispense his goods, or desire to be carvers for our selves? If it be unjust and unreasonable to do thus, then in all reason we ought to be content in every state that he disposeth us into, and to undergo patiently whatever he imposeth on us; yea we have reason to be more than content with every thing incident, not only as justly proceeding from him, but as presumable to be good and convenient for us: For is it not fit that we should think that God will order things for the best good of his own children? can we conceive that he willingly will hurt, or will not rather help them; that he will design them any mischief, yea that he will easily suffer it? *Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may* (God telleth us) *forget, yet he will not forget us*. Isa. 49. 15. Sooner indeed may the most tender parents become unnaturally regardless, spiteful and cruel toward their children, than the immutable God (who in his nature is unexpressibly benign and compassionate) shall neglect the good of his off-spring: good reason therefore have we to be satisfied with all that befalleth us.

6. Particularly this consideration obligeth us to be penitent and chearful in the sorest afflictions, as deeming them to come from a paternal hand, inflicted with great affection and compassion, designed for and tending to our good: *Thou shalt* (saith God to the Israelites) *consider in thy heart, that as a man chasteneth his son, so the Lord thy God chasteneth thee*: and, *We* (saith the *Apostle*) Deut. 8. 5. Heb. 12. 9, 10. *have had fathers of our flesh, which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection to the father of spirits, and live? for they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness*. The punishments inflicted on us by men may perhaps proceed from passion, but God assuredly never inflicts any thing grievous on us but out of pure good will: and what sweeter consolation can there be, than to know, that the most cross and distastful accidents befalling us, do (according to the intention of him that bringeth them on us, and manageth them) conduce to our profit, and shall in the event, if we do patiently receive them, and by our untowardness do not hinder their effect, prove wholesome and advantageous to us.

7. This consideration doth also shew the reason we have to obey those precepts, which injoin us to rely upon God's providence; *to cast all our burthen* Matt. 6. 24.

Phil. 4. 6.
1 Pet. 5. 7.
Psal. 37. 5.
—55. 23.

and care upon God; to be solicitous and anxious about nothing which concerneth our sustenance; for children commonly (especially such as have able and kind parents) do live altogether void of care concerning their maintenance, being assured that their parents will concern themselves to provide whatever is necessary or convenient for them; and how much more have we reason to live free of solicitude in such respects, who have a Father so infinitely sufficient to supply all our wants, and so tenderly affected toward us; so ever present with us, and always vigilant over us; who cannot but see and know our needs; and can most easily satisfy them, and is no less willing and ready, if we trust in him, to do it? *Do not* (saith our Lord) *take care, saying, what shall we eat, or what shall we drink, or wherewithal shall we be clothed—for your heavenly father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.* The like reason did even natural light suggest to a Philosopher: *If, saith he, kindred with Cæsar, or with any other great man in Rome, is sufficient to make a man live securely, without contempt, and without fear; will not the having God our maker, and father, and guardian, free us from griefs and fears?* 'Tis extreme infidelity concerning either the providence of God, or his power, or his goodness (that is, the practical disbelief of this point, or in our hearts disavowing God to be our Father,) which causeth all that carking and distraction of mind, that fear of wants, that grief for losses and disappointments, which do commonly possess men; together with those covetous desires, and unjust practices, with which the world aboundeth: He can hardly be guilty of them, who believeth and considereth, that God doth thus stand related and affected toward him.

Mat. 6. 31, 32.

Epiſt. Arr. 1.
9.

8. This consideration doth more generally in all regards serve to breed and cherish our faith, to raise our hope, to quicken our devotion: for whom shall we confide in, if not in such a Father? from whom can we expect good, if not from him, who hath already given us so much, even all that we have? to whom can we have recourse freely and cheerfully, upon any occasion, if not to him, who so kindly inviteth and calleth us to him, in so endearing terms, with so obliging an appellation? If we in any need, corporal or spiritual, request succour or supply from him, can we suspect that such a Father (so infinitely wise, so able, so good) will refuse us, or can fail us? No; *What man is there of us, that if his son ask him bread, will give him a stone; or if he ask a fish, will give him a serpent?* If we then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to our children; how much more shall your father in heaven give good things to them that ask him? So doth our Saviour with most convincing force of reason move us to the duty of prayer, with faith and confidence of good success. St. Luke hath it, *How much more shall your heavenly father give the holy spirit to them that ask him?* implying, that upon account of this relation we may in all our spiritual needs (if we do need light and direction in our doubts, or strength against temptations, or comfort in our distresses) be assured of finding requisite assistance and relief. We should therefore upon all exigencies address our selves to God, not with the fear of slaves, nor with the suspicion of strangers, but with dispositions of heart futable to children, with a reverent love, and humble confidence, and cheerful hope.

Mat. 7. 9, 10.
11.
Luke 11. 13.

9. Lastly, considering this point will direct and prompt us how to behave our selves towards all God's creatures, according to their respective natures and capacities: If God be the Father of all things, they are all thence in some sort our brethren, and so may claim from us a fraternal affection and demeanour answerable thereto: shall we then scorn, abuse, trample or tyrannize over any of them? doth it become us to do so? will our common Father like it, or endure it? If we are all branches sprouting from one stock, or streams issuing from the same source of divine beneficence and fecundity; if we are members of one body, of one commonwealth, of one family; we are then surely obliged to an universal benevolence, to be kind and compassionate, to be helpful and beneficial unto all, so far as our capacity reacheth; we are to endeavour, as we can, to preserve the order, and promote the welfare of the world, and of all things in it: Even upon this score the meanest of God's creatures is not to be despised, the vilest worm is not to be misused by us; since even it is the work of his hands, and the subject of his care, yea the object of

his kindness, *Who* (as the *Psalmist* telleth us) *is good unto all, and whose tender mercies are over all his works*: But especially toward those Beings, who according to a more peculiar and excellent sense are entitled the sons of our father, and to whom we are more nearly allied by our better part (that divine breath, which both they and we drew from God) toward all intellectual Beings, we do learn hence our respective duties; of love and respect toward those our elder brethren, the *Angels* (those of them, which have not degenerated from their nature, and apostatized from their duty) of charity and good will toward each other; which if we do not maintain, we may consider that we thereby are first undutiful and unkind to God our common father, and then even to our selves: we do hate and harm both God's relations and our own (God's children, and our brethren) by hating or harming any man whatever; especially any good man, any Christian brother; who by other more peculiar bands is straitly tied to us; who upon so many better and higher accounts standeth related unto God, and to our selves. *Aristotle* saith, that all men, upon grounds of natural cognition and similitude are naturally friends to one another; much more are all good men so by participation of a more excellent nature, and by a nobler resemblance: whence 'tis St. *Paul's* precept to Christians, that they should be τῇ φιλαδελφίᾳ εἰς ἀλλήλους φιλόστοργοι, that they should bear a natural affection each to other in brotherly love. Christians are in a more peculiar and eminent manner styled brethren; and that charity, which in respect to others is called *philanthropy* (or humanity) in regard to them is named *philadelphia* (or brotherly affection:) hence to perform all fraternal offices toward every christian, to wish heartily and earnestly to promote his good, to compassionate, and (as we are able) to relieve his evils, to bear his infirmities, and to comport with unkindnesses from him, and the like duties, are incumbent on us, as peculiar to our profession.

These are the principal uses which the consideration of this point suggesteth. Now God Almighty, the great Father of all things, and especially our gracious Father in *Christ Jesus*, grant that by his holy grace we may perform all filial duty toward him (rendring unto him all love and reverence, all praise and thanks, all worship and obedience, together with all faith and hope in him) that we may behave our selves in all things as becometh this relation, that we may resemble him in all goodness, that we may persist here continually in his favour, and obtain hereafter the blessed inheritance from him; this he of infinite mercy vouchsafe unto us, through *Jesus Christ* our Lord; to whom for ever be all glory and praise. *Amen.*

• Even to God the Father, the Creatour, Preserver and Governour of all things, the Authour and Donour of all good; to God the Son, the Redeemer of all the world, and foundation of all spiritual blessings; to God the Holy Ghost, the fountain of all true goodness, joy and comfort, be for ever and ever all glory and praise. *Amen.* •

Συγγενὲς πᾶν τὸ λογικόν. Ant. 3. 4.
Συγγενὴς, ἔχ. αἰματίῳ, καὶ σπέρματι τῶ αὐτοῦ, ἀλλὰ νῦν, καὶ θείας ἀπομοίεως μετοχῇ. Ant. 2. 1.

Si ab uno Deo inspirati omnes, & animati sumus, quid aliud quam fratres sumus, & quidem conjunctiores quod animis, quam qui corporibus: ergo pro bellis immanibus habendi sunt, qui hominibus nocent. Lactant. 10. 6.

Ἀνδράποδόν, ἢ ἀνέξῃ τῶ ἀδελφεῷ σου, ὅς ἔχει Δία πατέρα. Epict. Arr. 1. 13.

Οἰκεῖον ἅπας ἀνδρῶν καὶ ἀνδρώων καὶ φίλων. Arist. Eth. 8. 1.

Rom. 12. 10.

The Father Almighty.

SERMON XI.

REVEL. XI. 17.

O Lord God Almighty.

EVERY attribute of God is a proper and useful object of our consideration; as being apt to mind us of our duty, and to excite us to the practice thereof; to beget in us those dispositions of mind (that love and reverence toward God, that faith and hope in him) which we ought to have; and to draw from us real performances of obedience to him: Each of them doth ground obligations to piety, and yieldeth arguments to the practice thereof. To which purposes, that considering this divine attribute, *Almighty* (mentioned in our text) doth much avail, and that it therefore well deserveth to be pressed upon us, will appear more distinctly from the application we shall make thereof. At present we may perceive how considerable it is, by observing in gross; 1. That it is frequently in holy Scripture singled forth, as most proper to God, as most fully expressive of his glorious excellency and Majesty; particularly the most illuminate Ministers of God's praise, the *Seraphims* in *Esay*, the four Wights (or living creatures) in this Book, and the twenty four Elders in this place, do therefore use it. 2. It is that attribute, which is alone most expressly set down in our *Creed*, as especially necessary to be believed and considered: We say therein, *I Believe in God the Father Almighty*. 3. It is that with which we daily address our devotions unto God: In our prayers we say, *Almighty, and most merciful Father*; in our praises we cry, *Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty*, or (which is the same) *Lord God of Sabaoth*. It seems therefore fit and useful, that we should well understand the proper and full meaning thereof, together with the obligations grounded thereon, and the inducements it affordeth to good practice; that so when we hear it used in Scripture, when we profess to believe it, when we apply it to God in our devotions, we may so reflect thereupon, as to be admonished of our duty, and moved to the performance thereof. First therefore I will endeavour somewhat to explain it; then shall make a practical application thereof.

The title, Epithet, or Attribute *παντοκράτωρ*, which we (finding no other word more properly and fully to express it) do render *Almighty*, or omnipotent, is frequently in a manner peculiar and characteristical ascribed to God: The use thereof in the *New Testament* is, by citation or imitation, transferred from the *Greek* of the *Old*, where it serveth to express those two famous and usual names of God, *Sabaoth* and *Shaddai*; especially it answereth to the former; for the latter is only rendred thereby in some places of the Book of *Job*: but the former, *Sabaoth* (when interpreted, and not left in its own sound) is constantly rendred *παντοκράτωρ*. I call *Sabaoth* a name of God: for that it is so, it is in several places expressly affirmed; as in *Jeremy*: *Their Redeemer is strong, Jehovah Sabaoth is his name*; and in *Esay*: *For they call themselves of the holy City, and stay themselves upon the God of Israel; the Lord of hosts is his name*: and in *Amos*: *He that formeth the mountains, and createth the wind, and de-*

Isa. 6. 3.
Rev. 4. 8.

*ΟΛΟΙΟΙ ἀνέ-
ρες, οἱ Σα-
βαώθ νόον
ἐδιδόν ἐδω-
κεν. Verſ. Si-
byll. lib. 1.
Jer. 50. 34.
Isa. 48. 2.

Amos 4. 13.

createth

clayeth unto man, what is his thought—*Jehovah Elohei Sabaoth is his name* (from a sort of *Jove*, called *Ζεύς Ζαββαὶ*, mentioned in some *Pagan Writers*, Cicero, Aristoph. &c. Seld. de Diis S. cap. 3.) Now as all the Names and appellations of God are significant, and denote some perfection, or some prerogative belonging to him (as *Jehovah* signifieth his self-subsistence, independency, immutability and eternity; *Elohim* his omnipotence; *Shaddai* his all-sufficiency; *Adonai* his supreme dominion and authority) so doth this name, or Title, *Sabaoth*, primitively seem to import God's universal conduct and managery of all creatures: for all things in the World, as being ranged in a goodly and convenient order, (like an army marching in array, or marshalled to battel) are called armies, or *Sabaoth*. Thus (after the history of the creation it is said) *The heavens and earth were finished, and all the host of them* (*πᾶς κόσμος αὐτῶν*, Gen. 2. 1. all the furniture, or all the *Battalion* of them) and, *By the word of the Lord* Psal. 33. 6. *were the heavens made* (saith the *Psalmist*) and all the host of them: and, *Bless the Lord, all ye his hosts, ye Ministers of his, that do his pleasure*; that is, all creatures, which are subject to his command, and subservient to his will; and, *Lift up* (saith *Esay*) *your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things, that bringeth out their host by number: he calleth them all by names, by the greatness of his might, for that he is strong in power, not one faileth*: Where God is represented to us as the General of an Army, drawing forth and ordering his creatures, as a General summoneth to a rendezvous, mustereth and embattail-eth his troops: hence this title of *Sabaoth*, which is rendred *παντοκράτωρ*, doth seem derived.

But we need not deal so strictly, as to limit the sense of this word, according to its original rise, or its use in translation; but since it hath been authenticated by its use in the holy fountains of truth, the Old and New Testament, and is there used so, as to signify or imply the sum of divine perfections and pre-eminences; being (as it seems) selected especially for that purpose, we may presume to take it in its common latitude, for *ὁ πάντων κερταῖν*, or *ὁ πάντων κερταῖν ἔχων*, according to which extent, it may have various importances, somewhat different. It may accordingly denote, 1. Right or authority over all beings; *Omni-potestas*: and, 2. A power or ability to do all things; *Omni-potentia*. 3. The actual exercise of such authority, and such power, in ruling and disposing all things; *Omni-potentatus*. 4. The possession of all things, or the containing and holding all things in his hand; *Omni-tenentia* ('tis *St. Augustine's* word.) 5. The preservation or upholding of all things in their being and state: for the word *κερταῖν*, according to its propriety and ordinary use, may infer and ground all these significations; and according to them all, God is truly *παντοκράτωρ*. Let us survey the particulars, and shew how God, especially in holy Scripture, is represented in respect to them.

1. God is *παντοκράτωρ*, as having a just right and authority over all things;—he naturally is the sovereign Lord and Emperour of the world; for whatever imaginable reason or ground there is of authority, doth in respect to all things agree unto God. *Aristotle*, in his *Politicks*, discourseth thus; Government doth aim at, and tend to the mutual benefit of the governour and governed; he therefore, who is most able and best disposed to provide for, and procure the common benefit, is according to natural reason and justice (secluding other considerations of laws and compacts, of former constitutions, of present possession, and the like) to be the Governour; or he deserves, and is fit to be so, and (no other reason hindring) becometh such: (*That*, saith the *Philosopher*, *which naturally is apt, or able to provide, doth naturally rule, and naturally lord-eth*.) Whence the soul hath a right to govern the body, and men naturally do rule over beasts; and were there any such persons, as did without any question very eminently exceed others in wisdom and goodness, to them according to natural congruity the government of others would appertain; the common advantage so requiring: and if such excellency of nature be a foundation of authority, then God, who in wisdom and goodness doth incomparably surpass all things, hath assuredly the right to govern all. So a *Pagan* Authour could discourse. *There is* (saith *Cicero*) *nothing better than God; therefore it is necessary the World*

Nihil est prestantius Deo; ab eo igitur necesse est mundum regi. Cic. de N. D. 2.

should

- Rom. 16. 17. *should be ruled by him* : He is the *Only wise* (as St. Paul telleth us) and thence
 Luke 18. 19. *most able* ; he is *only good* (as our Saviour teacheth us) and thence most apt to
 manage all things for the general welfare and benefit of the world. If also
 eminency of power doth qualify for dominion (as it surely doth ; for that which
 cannot be withstood, must in reason be submitted to ; it is vain to question
 that authority, which by force altogether irresistible can assert and maintain
 it self) God hath the only right, nothing in the world being able to contest
 Psal. 89. 6, 8. his Title ; for, *Who in the heaven can be compared unto the Lord ? who among
 the sons of the mighty can be likened unto the Lord ? O Lord God of Hosts, who
 is a strong Lord like unto thee ?* says the holy Psalmist contemplating this divine
 attribute : all things are weak and feeble in comparison ; are altogether in his
 hand and under his feet ; are thoroughly at his discretion and disposal : *The*
 Jer. 10. 10. *Lord* (saith the Prophet) *is the true God, and the everlasting King : at his wrath
 the earth shall tremble, and the nations shall not be able to abide his indignation.*
 Psal. 66. 3, 7. And, *How terrible* (saith the Psalmist) *art thou in thy works ? through the great-
 ness of thy power shall thine enemies submit themselves unto thee—He ruleth by
 his power for ever, his eyes behold the nations : let not the rebellious exalt
 themselves.*

- If also to have made all things, and to preserve them, doth create a right
 of governing (as it must needs do so ; for what can we justly challenge a do-
 minion over, if not over our own works, over that which we continually
 keep and nourish ; over that which altogether depends upon us, and which
 subsists at our pleasure?) then well may the *Apocalyptical Elders* thus acknow-
 ledge : *Worthy art thou, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power* (that
 is, to possess the royal Majesty and sovereign dominion over the world) *for
 thou hast made all things, and for thy will they are, and were created.* Well
 Apoc. 5. 13. *might every creature, that is in heaven, and in the earth, and under the earth,
 and those things which are in the sea, and all things in them, cry out there,
 To him that sitteth upon the throne (and to the Lamb) be the blessing, and the*
 * τὸ κέϊνθ. *honour, and the glory, * and the dominion, for ever and ever.* Well might King
 Isa. 37. 16. *Hezekiah say, O Lord of hosts : thou art the God ; thou alone of all the Kingdoms
 of the earth, thou hast made heaven and earth : And the Levites in Nebemiah ;*
 Neh. 9. 6. *Thou, even thou art the Lord alone ; thou hast made heaven and earth ; the hea-
 ven of heavens, with all their hosts ; the earth, and all things that are therein ;
 the sea, and all that is therein ; and thou preservest them all, and all the host of
 heaven worshippeth thee.* Thus is God παντοκράτωρ ; as he is upon all imagi-
 nable accounts, and according to all reasonable grounds of right, the rightful
 Virg. Æn. 10. *Sovereign of all things ; as he is,—Divinūque hominūque potestas,* as the wisest
 Poet doth acknowledge and style him.

2. He is also such in regard to his infinite power, as that word may signify
 Omnipotent. Natural light affordeth pregnant arguments of the greatness of
 his power, displayed in the constitution and conservation of the World ; his
 disposing so stupendiously vast, so unconceivably various creatures, into so
 comely and stable a posture ; whence *his eternal power and divinity are dis-
 cerned* (as St. Paul telleth us :) for he that could effect so much, his power
 must needs be far greater than we can imagine or comprehend : To natural
 light, I say, it is incomprehensibly great, and exceedeth all definite limits ;
 but holy Scripture more clearly and fully declareth the extent of his power ;
 asserting, that it is not only in respect to our weak conceit and narrow capa-
 city, but in it self truly infinite, reaching the utmost possibility of things :
 It teacheth us, that whatever is not contrary to his nature, or to his essential
 perfections (to his goodness, fidelity, holiness, wisdom) which it doth not
 mis-become him to do ; or which is not repugnant to the nature of things to
 be done (that is, which doth not imply a contradiction, and thereby is im-
 possible, and becomes no object of power) for such things *he cannot do, be-
 cause he is omnipotent,* as St. Austin acutely says ; he is able with perfect ease
 and facility to achieve it : There is among things good and possible nothing
 so difficult, but he can perform it ; nothing so strong and stubborn, but he
 can subdue it. *Is any thing too hard for the Lord ?* said God to Abraham,
 Gen. 18. 14. when Sarah doubted, or wondred concerning the promise, that she in ex-
 treme

*Deus propter
 reā quadam
 non potest,
 quia omni-po-
 tens est.
 Aug. de Civ.
 D. 5. 10.
 Gen. 18. 14.*

treme an age should become fruitful. *Behold* (said the Prophet *Jeremy* in his Jer. 32. 17, 27. prayer) *thou hast made the heaven and the earth by thy great and thy stretched out arm, and there is nothing too hard for thee.* Οὐκ ἀδυνατῶσα Οὐδὲ πᾶν φέμει. Luke 1. 37. *Nothing* (that can be said, or conceived, or performed) *shall be impossible to God, if he pleaseth to design, or undertake it,* said the Angel to the blessed Virgin, when he delivered so strange a message to her concerning an event so wonderful and supernatural, as our Saviour's conception of her. That a rich man should be induced intirely to comply with God's will, and willingly to part with all, our Saviour affirmed exceedingly difficult (hardly any thing could be supposed more difficult; harder it was, than for a Camel to pass through the eye of a Needle;) but to satisfy his disciples scruple thence arising, he subjoins: *With men* (or according to the common sense of men) *this is impossible, but to God all things are possible.* *In thine hand* (said King *Jehoshaphat*) *there is power, and might, so that none is able to withstand thee.* Matt. 19. 26. 2 Chr. 20. 6. And King *Nebuchadnezzar* having felt an experiment of his power, and being returned to a right understanding, confesseth thus: *He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What dost thou?* *The Lord of hosts* (saith the Prophet) *hath purposed, and who shall disannul it? his hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back?* Dan. 4. 35. Isa. 14. 27. To stop the Sun in his career, to make the Sea stand upon an heap, to draw streams of water from a rock, to restrain fire from burning, to restore the blind and lame, to raise the dead, to suspend, thwart, invert the course of nature; with all such things, which we so wonder at, and term miracles; are comparatively but slender, and, as it were, perfunctory instances of his power: for with the greatest ease, by the least exertion of his power, by a thought, a look, a touch, a word, the greatest things are performed: *He looketh on the earth, and it trembleth; he toucheth the hills, and they smoke.* Psal. 18. 18. *He overturneth the mountains in his anger, and shaketh the earth out of her place: The pillars of heaven tremble, and are astonished at his reproof.* Job 9. 5: —26. 11. These seem great and strange effects of power; yet in respect to what he can do, and hath done, they are small: for he at first made the whole world with a word; so the history of the Creation expresth it, and so the Psalmist telleth us: *By the word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth:* And by a word he doth preserve it, upholding (as the Apostle to the Hebrews speaketh) *all things by the word of his power,* or by his powerful word: And by a word he can destroy and annihilate all things; yea more easily, in a manner he can do it even by his mere silence, or by withdrawing that salutary breath, by virtue of which all things subsist: *Thou hidest thy face* (saith the Psalmist) *they are troubled; thou withholdest thy breath, they dye, and return to their dust.* Psal. 104. 28: Job 34. 14, 20: For we may consider, that in this respect also God is all-powerful, as being the source from which all power is derived, by which all power is sustained, upon which all power doth depend: He not only can do all things inclusively, but exclusively, or so that nothing can be done without him. That of our Saviour, *Without me ye can do nothing,* is not only true in spiritual, but in all other matters. *He* (as St. Paul preached at Athens) *giveth life* (or being, with all vital faculties) *and breath* (that is, all natural powers) *and all things unto all: In him* (or rather by him) *we live, and move, and have our being;* that is, whatever we are, whatever we have, whatever we can do, doth proceed from him, doth depend upon him. Thus is God παντοκράτωρ, as All-powerful.

3. God is also so, by reason that he doth actually exercise all dominion, and doth exert his power continually, according to his good pleasure; he not only hath a just title to govern all things, and a perfect ability to sway in all matters, but he constantly useth them: *The Lord hath prepared his throne in heaven, and his Kingdom ruleth over all.* Psal. 103. 19. *God is the King of all the Earth—God reigneth over the heathen* (or the nations) *God sitteth upon the Throne of his holiness.* Psal. 47. 7, 8. Psal. 103. 4. *The Lord is high above all nations, and his glory above the heavens. Who is like unto the Lord our God, who humbleth himself to behold the things, that are in heaven and earth?* It is indeed, as the holy Man saith, a great condescension in God, that he will vouchsafe to have the inspection and administration of things

so much inferiour to him, yet for the common good of his creatures he is pleased to do it: *Thine* (saith King David) *O Lord, is the Kingdom, and thou art exalted as head above all; both riches and honour come of thee, and thou reignest over all; in thine hand is power and might, &c.* He is indeed the only Governour, absolutely, originally and independently so; ὁ μόνος δυνατός, *the only Potentate*, as St. Paul calleth him; All authority and power are imparted by him, and subordinate to him; from his disposal and direction all Potentates do receive them; in his name and behalf, by virtue of his commission and command, as his delegates and Ministers, for his honour, interest and service they administer any just dominion, or power: It was *Nebuchadnezzar's* doom to be driven from men, until he did understand and embrace this truth, so necessary for all Governours to know and consider, that, *The most High ruleth in the Kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will; that, His Kingdom is an everlasting Kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.* Promotion cometh neither from the East, nor from the West, nor from the South, but God is the Judge, he putteth down one, and setteth up another. There is no power but from God; the powers that are, are appointed by God. The judgment is God's (as Moses said in his charge to the Judges of Israel,) being exercised by his order, and in his behalf: Thus is God παντοκράτωρ, as the only absolute Sovereign Lord, the author and fountain of all just authority, *the Lord of Lords, and King of Kings*, as the Scripture often doth style him.

4. God is also παντοκράτωρ, as the true proprietary and just possessour of all things. *Blessed be Abraham* (saith King Melchisedeck) *of the most high God, Possessour of heaven and earth;* and, *Behold* (saith Moses to his people) *the heaven, and the heaven of heavens is the Lord's, thy God; the earth also with all that is therein; and, The earth* (saith the Psalmist) *is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; the World, and they that dwell therein, for he hath founded it upon the Seas, and prepared it upon the floods; and, The heavens,* saith he again, *are thine, the earth also is thine; as for the world, and the fulness thereof* (that is, all which the world contains, all with which it is furnished and replenished) *thou hast founded them; and, The Sea is his, and he made it, and his hands formed the dry land:* all things they say are the goods and possessions of God; proving it from hence, that he made them, and thereby acquired a propriety in them; for there is no more evident and perfect ground of propriety than this: the products of our invention and care, the fruits of our endeavour and industry, even we do think that reasonably we may call our own, and justly claim the enjoyment of: how much more he, that by an original, uncommunicated, independent wisdom and power, hath contrived and produced all things? from thence surely do result such a title to them all, that the entire and absolute disposal of them doth appertain to him; so that he may apply them, as the potter doth the vessels which he maketh (it is the Scripture comparison) to what use he thinketh good; that he may freely place and bestow them where he pleaseth; that he may take them away, or transfer them, when he seeth fit: they can never be so alienated from him, that the enjoyment of them doth not wholly depend on him, and that at pleasure (his wisdom and goodness permitting, his truth and word being solved) he may not resume them to himself.

5. God is also παντοκράτωρ, as containing and comprehending all things by his immense presence and infinite capacity: it is a name which the Jewish Doctors commonly apply to God, *hamakom*, the place, because all things do subsist in him; he being (as St. Hierome speaks) *infused through all things, and circumfused about all things; so as to penetrate them within, and to contain them without; so as to be within all things not included, and without all things not excluded:* and, *We do not* (saith Minutius Felix) *only live in the eye, but in the bosom of God.* The whole world, how vast soever it seemeth to our narrow conceit, is but as a drop, or as an atome of dust in his hand: *Behold* (saith the Prophet elegantly and truly) *the nations are as a drop of a bucket*

In omnibus infusus, & circumfusus, ut cuncta penetret interior, & contineat exterior. Hier. ad Marcell. 5.

Intra omnia nec inclusus, extra omnia nec exclusus.

Non solum in oculis Dei, sed in sinu vivimus. Minut. F.

Solus est omnia & opus suum & extra & intra tenet. Sen. Praef. Nat. Q.

Isa. 40. 15. 48. (saith the Prophet elegantly and truly) *the nations are as a drop of a bucket*

ket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance: behold he taketh up the Isles as a very little thing; all nations are before him as nothing, and they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity: and, I fill heaven and earth, saith God in Jeremy: and King Solomon in his prayer saith more; *Behold the heaven of heavens cannot contain thee*: and, *Whither* (saith the Psalmist) *shall I go from thy Spirit, or whither shall I flee from thy presence; if I ascend up into heaven thou art there, if I make my bed in hell, behold thou art there; if I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me.*

6. Lastly, God is *παντοκράτωρ* in regard that he sustains and preserves all things. When (saith Saint Gregory Nyssen) we hear the word *παντοκράτωρ*, we understand this, that God containeth all things in being: Thou, (say the Levites in Nehemiah,) even thou art God alone, thou hast made heaven and earth, the heaven of heavens with all their hosts; the earth and all things that are therein, and thou preservest them all, and the host of heaven worshippeth thee.

Colos. 1. 17. Heb. 1. 3.
Ὅταν τῆς παντοκράτορος φύσιν ἀνέ-
οιμεν, ὅσοι νοούμεν, τὰ πάντα ἢ θεὸν ἐν
τῷ ἰδὲ συνέχεον, Greg. Nyss.
Neh. 9. 6.

In all these respects and senses doth the title *παντοκράτωρ* (which we for want of a word more adequate and expressive, do render *Almighty*) belong to God: The Greek word in the latitude of its signification, according to its etymology, comprehendeth all these senses, and the design in its use, as we before touched, warranteth the taking it in the largest acception; but however it certainly respecteth the former senses, denoting the absolute Universal Sovereignty, and the immense irresistible power of God: the belief and consideration of which particulars is of Great importance, and may have a very useful influence upon our practice: for,

I. If God be the Just Sovereign of all things, having a right to govern the World, and actually exercising it; then

1. We see our condition and state here in this world. We live not in an anarchy, or in perfect liberty; we are not our own Masters, or have a right to guide our actions according to our own will, or after our own fancy; but we are under government; a government most absolute and arbitrary; the laws whereof we may not dispute, the proceedings whereof we cannot resist. Whence

2. We understand our duty, that as subjects and vassals, we are obliged to render all awful reverence, worship and obedience to God; humbly to adore the Majesty, readily to perform the commands, and patiently to submit to the will of our great Sovereign: to conform all our actions to that heavenly law, under which we are born and live in the world.

We do not (even Plutarch could tell us) come hither into life to make laws, but to obey those which are appointed by God, who ordereth all things; to observe the decrees of destiny and providence.

Οὐ γὰρ νομοθετήσαντες παρθεσμεν εἰς τὴν βίον, ἀλλὰ περὶ ὁμοῦ τοῖς διατεταγμένοις ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ ὅλα, ἀσπασυνόντων θεῶν, καὶ τοῖς ἑμαρμένους, καὶ προνοίας θεσμοῖς. Plut. Consol. ad Apol.

3. Hence we may discern the heinousness of every sin, or transgression of God's law; it receiving great aggravation hence. It hence appeareth not only a matter of simple folly, or private inconvenience, (contrary to our reason) but of publick mischief and general ill consequence; being committed against the crown and dignity of God Almighty; against the peace and order of the World; which subsist by the observation of his laws. Every sin is an act of high rebellion, a breach of our natural allegiance, a lifting up our selves (as is said of Belshazzar) against our Sovereign; an infringing that right, and violating that honour of his, which he by his place and office is concerned to maintain and vindicate.

4. We may hence learn what reason we have to be content in every condition, and to undergo patiently every event befalling us: for that our station is allotted to us by an unquestionable right, and all things are dispensed to us by a common law, from which nothing can be exempted; for that things come not by a blind necessity or chance, but are disposed and managed

Nilil borum indignandum est; in eum intravimus mundum, in quo his legibus vivitur. Sen. Epist. 91.

Vitum bonum concedas necesse est summa pietatis erga Deos esse; itaq; quicquid illi acciderit, a quo animo sustinebit; scit enim id accidisse lege divina, quâ universa procedunt. Sen. Ep. 76.

indeed intolerable arrogance and forwardness in us to desire an exemption from that common law, to which all things are subject; to wish our selves out of that order, in which the all-guiding providence hath set us; to be dissatisfied with any thing, which by the supreme wisdom is assigned to us: It becomes i Sam. 3. 18. eth us to say with old *Eli*; *It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good*; Psal. 39. 9. to say upon all occasions with *David*: *I was dumb, I opened not my mouth,*

πάντα θαυμάζων, πάντα ἐπαινῶν, πάντα ἀνεξέταστος ἀποδέχεσθαι τὰ τῆς προνοίας ἔργα, καὶν φαίνεσθαι πολλοῖς ἀδίκᾳ, διὰ τὸ ἀγνοῦν τὸ θεῖον, καὶ ἀκατάληπτον τὸ θεῖον πᾶσι περὶ τὴν ἀκαταλήπτου. Damasc. de O. F. 2. 29.

ged by Sovereign reason and wisdom. *We must* (saith an *Ethnick Philosopher*) *not be displeased at any of these things; for we are come into that world, where we must live by these laws*: and, *A good man must needs be granted to be highly pious toward God; he therefore will sustain all accidents with equanimity; as knowing them to happen unto him by a divine law, by which all things proceed.* It were in-

deed intolerable arrogance and forwardness in us to desire an exemption from that common law, to which all things are subject; to wish our selves out of that order, in which the all-guiding providence hath set us; to be dissatisfied with any thing, which by the supreme wisdom is assigned to us: It becomes i Sam. 3. 18. eth us to say with old *Eli*; *It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good*; Psal. 39. 9. to say upon all occasions with *David*: *I was dumb, I opened not my mouth, because thou didst it*; upon this consideration we should not only be satisfied with, and acquiesce in, but praise and adore all occurrences of providence, how unkindly soever, and distasteful they appear to us; supposing a just and reasonable cause to lie under them, although indiscernible to us. Yea farther,

5. It is a matter of great consolation to reflect, that we and all the world are under such a government; 'tis a common felicity, 'tis our particular happiness that we are so; for 'tis no unjust usurper, 'tis no merciless tyrant, 'tis no fond, no weak, no careless person that we are in subjection to, but a most just, most mild, most gracious, most wise, most powerful, most vigilant Lord; who will deal most equally, and most benignly with us; who sincerely and earnestly tenders our welfare; who is watchful and careful for our good; who is able to provide for all our needs, and to protect us from all mischief; all whose laws do only aim at our benefit; all whose proceedings toward us are full of equity, goodness and truth; who will not only favourably accept, but most bountifully recompence our obedience; whom to serve and obey is a privilege, far better and more desirable for us, than to be free, than to be wholly at our own disposal, and under our own guidance; the very nature and the end of his government being only to pre-

Deut. 10. 12. serve us, and to rescue us from the errors, the slaveries, the vexations and miseries we are apt to incur; by virtue of whose universal dominion we are secured, that no malice of devil, no injustice of men, no sort of enemy whatever (excepting our own wilful disobedience to his laws, and directions) shall be able to do us harm; for all them he governs, and he curbs no less than our selves. Of this our King it is truly said, that *Justice and judgment*

Psal. 89. 14. *are the establishment of his throne; mercy and truth go before his face*; that, Psal. 145. 17. *He is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his doings*: that, The sceptre Apoc. 15. 3. *of his kingdom is a right sceptre*; that, *His yoke is easie, and his burthen light.* Matt. 11. 3. In confidence of his protection we may say with the Psalmist; the Lord is Psal. 27. 1. *my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear; the Lord is the strength of my* 46. 1. 56. 4. *life, of whom shall I be afraid? God is our refuge and strength—therefore will I not fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea. In God have I put my trust, I will not fear what flesh can do unto me.* Well therefore may we, may the whole world in consideration of our being under so good a governour be excited to joy and jubilation with the Psalmist; O clap your hands all ye people, shout unto God with Psal. 47. 1. 96. *the voice of triumph*; for the Lord most high is terrible, he is a great King over 10. 98. 8. *all the earth. Say among the nations, that the Lord reigneth; the world also shall be established, that it shall not be moved, he shall judge the people righteously, let the heavens rejoyce, and let the earth be glad, &c. Let the Flouds clap their hands, let the hills be joyful together before the Lord, for he cometh to judge the earth; with righteousness shall he judge the world, and the people with equity*: Or with those in the Revelation: *Allelujah, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth; let us be glad, and rejoyce, and give honour unto him. All the world hath exceeding reason not only to be content, but to rejoyce and*

triumph in being subject to such a Governour, so able, so willing to maintain peace, good order, and equity therein: so that we also are obliged to bless and thank God, that he condescends so far, and vouchsafes to undertake the tuition and oversight of the world; obeying the Psalmist's exhortation; *The Lord (saith he) hath prepared his throne in heaven, and his kingdom ruleth over all: therefore, Bless the Lord ye his angels — Bless the Lord all his hosts — Bless the Lord all his works in all places of his dominion; imitating herein those Elders in the Revelation; who say, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken unto thee thy great power, and hast reigned.* They who imagine the world is not governed at all, but that with unloosed reins it runneth on at random, are very foolish; but more such are they, who wish it to be so, and in their desires depose God from his throne; for they do wish for anarchy and confusion in their Country, instead of the most excellent establishment and order, maintained by the wisest and ablest government. That good Emperour was better advised, and better affected, who said, *What good were it for me to live in a world void of a Deity, and Providence? and, Why should I desire to continue in such a casual jumble, and rout of things?* The world, he well supposed, divine governance being excluded, would be a strange disorderly and uncomfortable place to abide in. And old Socrates, in the *Phædon*, discoursing about his departure hence, comforts himself in that, as he hoped, he was going thither, where the Gods did preside with a nearer inspection, and a more apparent influence: these were worthy desires, and noble hopes proceeding from natural reason, and moral virtue in such persons; but much more reason, and much greater obligation have we to be satisfied with, and to comfort our selves in the assurance, that all things, even at present, here are moderated by a superintendency far more equal, and more propitious, than they could imagine or hope. These, and such like practical uses the belief and consideration of God's sovereign authority and dominion do afford: the belief and consideration of God's immense and uncontrollable power is also of very great importance, and influence upon practice.

1. It serveth to beget in us a due awe, and dread of God: considering God's other attributes may breed in us a high esteem, and hearty love of God, but the consideration of his power is that which naturally and reasonably produceth a great fear of him: he is most amiable for his goodness, and in regard to his wisdom greatly venerable, but his power, arming the rest, renders him exceedingly terrible. *Hear ye this (it is said in the Prophet Jeremy) O foolish people, and without understanding; fear ye not me, saith the Lord, will ye not tremble at my presence, which hath placed the sand for the bounds of the sea, &c? and, Forasmuch as there is none like unto thee, O Lord, thou art great, and thy name is great in might, who would not fear thee, O thou King of nations? and, I will shew you (saith our Saviour) whom ye should fear; Fear him, who after he hath killed (or who beside killing) hath power to cast into hell; I say unto you fear him: great reason he had so earnestly to inculcate that admonition, the case being so apparent, and so important.*

2. This point doth consequently in high measure dissuade and deter us from sin, implying the extreme folly in committing it, and the inevitable mischief following it. The consideration of God's other attributes infer it to be great baseness and stupidity to oppose or displease God, but the consideration of this demonstrateth it to be infinite madness to do so. For to wrong, dishonour and displease him, that is so good and beneficent to us is great dissingenuity and unworthiness: to swerve from his advice and direction, who is only and perfectly wise is highly vain and unreasonable; but for so feeble, and impotent things, as we are, to contest with, and withstand, to provoke and offend omnipotency (that which with infinite ease can defeat and subdue us, can depress us into misery, can crush us into nothing) is most palpably the top of insolent wildness. It is Moses his argument, where-

Τί μοι ζῆν ἐν κόσμῳ κενὸν θεῶν, ἢ περὶ τὰς κενῶν; Ant. 2. Sect. 11.

Τί καὶ ἐπιθυμῶ εἰκόλῳ συγκλήματι, καὶ οὐκ ἐμὸν τοῦτο ἐνδιατελεῖν; Idem 6. Sect. 10.

Luke 12. 5.
Μετὰ τὸ ἀποκρίναται.

Deut. 10. 17. whereby he presseth obedience to his Law: *Circumcise therefore, saith he, the foreskin of your heart, and be no more stiff-necked, for the Lord your God is God of gods, and Lord of lords, a great God, and a mighty, and a terrible.* 'Tis no less an evidently convincing, than a vehemently affecting increpation, that of St. Paul: *Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy, are we stronger than he?* and, God himself in Job useth the like scheme of speech: *Hast thou an arm like God, and canst thou thunder with a voice like him?* if thou art as strong, if thou hast such an arm, then mayst thou perhaps dare to contend with him, and adventure to provoke him; but if thou no-wise art his match, if thou art infinitely short of him in strength, how vain and rash a thing is it for thee to defy him thus, to enter with him into the lists, to strive and grapple with him? to do, as the sinner in Job is expressed doing: *He stretcheth out his hand against God, and strengtheneth himself against the Almighty.* All presumptuous sinning is described and represented in Scripture as a comparing, and in effect preferring our power and force in regard to the power of God; or as a tempting God, and challenging him to battle; or as an actual coping, contention and fighting with him; sinners as such are styled the adversaries of God, and rebels against him; such as rise up, and lift up themselves, and raise their hand against him; which doth either imply in them a more than Gigantick pride and arrogance in over-valuing their own power, and under-valuing the power of God (which doth also involve infidelity, and disbelief of God's omnipotence; for he who believeth that, cannot take himself for God's match, or dare to struggle with him) or it argueth a most strange inconsiderateness and vanity in presuming at so infinite a disadvantage, without any ground of confidence, without any hope of success, to oppose God's will and power. Οὐ δυνάμενος, ὅς ἀνταρτοῖσι μάχεσθαι: *He is not long-lived, who fighteth with the immortals*, old Homer could tell us; the same which the Prophet says; *Wo unto him that striveth with his maker.* Nothing indeed can be more reasonable, than that advice of the Preacher: *Contend not with him that is mightier than thou*; which in this case in effect is the same with this; Do not by sinning offend or provoke God.

3. Whence likewise the consideration of this point may dispose us to weigh our counsels, and thereupon not to adventure upon any unwarrantable resolution or design; there being so apparent reason to despair of success, an insuperable power, being always ready to obstruct and cross us in the carriage of such designs, with whatever cunning laid, or backed with whatever might; for hence those sayings in Scripture are manifestly verified: *There is no wisdom, nor understanding, nor counsel against the Lord: and, no weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper*; and, *He is wise in heart, and mighty in strength, who hath hardened himself against him, and prospered?*

4. It also likewise serveth to depress in us all confidence in our selves, and in all other things, as to any security in them, or succour from them: for all things in the world, though they conspire and combine together all their forces, will be altogether unable to support us, to assist us, to defend us against the divine power, or indeed without it; they being all, otherwise than as maintained by him, infinitely feeble and frail: *Though hand join in hand* (that is, notwithstanding the conjunction of all powers whatever) *the wicked shall not be unpunished*, saith the Wiseman: and, *I kill* (saith God) *and I make alive, I wound, and I heal; neither is there any thing that can deliver out of my hand*; and, *No King is saved by the multitude of an host; a mighty man is not delivered by much strength; a horse is a vain thing for safety.*

5. It therefore also may be of a special efficacy to quell and mortifie in us the vices of pride, haughtiness, arrogance, self-will, stubbornness and contumacy; since contemplating the power of God we cannot but perceive our selves to be very pitiful, impotent and insignificant things: who without permission cannot effect any thing; who cannot expect in any case to have our will; who have continually curbs in our mouths, and manacles on our hands; so that we cannot say or do any thing, cannot so much as stir, or endeavour any thing, without check or control; being under a predominant force, which always resisteth the proud: under the power of him, who hath said, the *lofty looks*

looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down; 16. 2. 11. 13. 11. 24. 21. 10. 2. whose character and peculiar work it is to behold every one that is proud, and Job 40. 11, 12. 38. 15. to abase him; to cause the arrogancy of the proud to cease, and to lay low the Psal. 18. 27. 11a. 23. 9. haughtiness of the terrible; to break the high arm, and to bring down the high 1 Pet. 5. 6. looks; and to stain the pride of all glory. Whence there is all the reason in the world, that we should obey St. Peter's injunction; to *Humble our selves under the mighty hand of God.*

6. The consideration of God's omnipotence ferveth to breed and nourish faith in God, as to the certain performance of his word and promises: for let the accomplishment of them be to appearance never so difficult or improbable, yet he is able to perform them, and will therefore do it. *The strength of Israel* (as Samuel said) *will not lie, nor repent*: and, *Hath he said it, and shall he not do it; or hath he spoken it, and shall he not make good?* said Balaam, inspiredly: and, *The Lord of hosts* (saith Esay) *hath purposed it, and who shall disannul it? his hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back?* and, *My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure; I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed, I will also do it*: and, *My word that goeth out of my mouth, it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please; it shall prosper unto the thing whereunto I sent it*: and, *The counsel of the Lord* (saith the Psalmist) *standeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations*: Let all the earth fear the Lord; let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him; for he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast: and, *Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away*. So doth God assert his immutable fidelity, and considering his indefectible power doth assure us, that we may rely upon his word; and the doing so is very grateful, and acceptable to God; for it was that vertue, for which Abram is so highly commended, and so highly rewarded: *He did not* (saith St. Paul of him) *stagger at the promise of God, through unbelief, but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; being fully persuaded, that what God had promised, he was able to perform*: To do otherwise is very displeasing and offensive to God; for we do thereby either doubt of his veracity, so (as St. John saith) *making him a liar*; or we disbelieve his power, and make him impotent in our conceit; which to do is high injury to God, and detestable sacrilege. Hence also,

7. Particularly this consideration may produce and cherish our faith in the sufficiency of God's providence, and may induce us entirely to rely upon it. For if God be omnipotent, then is he easily able to supply us in all our needs, to relieve us in all our straits, to protect us from all danger and mischief; and being able he will not fail to do it, since his goodness also disposeth him thereto, and his word engageth him; he having declared himself to be the patron, protectour and benefactour of the needy; he having promised to help, relieve and comfort those who seek and cry unto him. Distrust in God's providence is always grounded, either in the disbelief of God's goodness, or of his power; either supposing him to be unwilling, or unable to do us good; and that the former is commonly grounded on the latter, the Israelites constant behaviour in the wilderness (representing the ordinary conversation of men in this world) doth inform us; who conceived their needs greater, than that God was able to supply them; their enemies stronger, than that by God's assistance they could withstand, or subdue them; the obstacles to their proceedings such, that God himself could not carry them through them; for, as the Psalmist representeth their behaviour and discourse; *They spake against God, saying, Can God furnish a table in the wilderness? Behold he smote the rock, that the water gushed out, and the streams overflowed; can he give bread also, can he provide flesh for his people?* and, that from their conceiting God unable to convey them through all dangers and difficulties, to render them victorious over the tall men, and the fenced Cities of Canaan, they, notwithstanding God's presence with them, and ready aid, desponded in heart, and murmured, and provoked God; and in consequence of such misbehaviour forfeited obtaining the rest propounded to them, many passages in the story do shew us. We in practice do commonly follow them, not-

notwithstanding the many experiments of God's wonderful power and goodness, frequently suspecting that God cannot supply our necessities, or satisfy our desires; whence we are either over-born with anxiety, and become disconsolate, or have recourse for succour and relief to other aids, deserting God, as the *Prophet* intimates, when he (withal declaring the offence God taketh at such miscarriages, with the guilt and mischief we thereby incur) pronounceth thus: *Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord; for he shall be like the heath in the desert, and shall not see when good cometh, &c.* Whence our Saviour took it ill of his Disciples, and rebuked them, when even in the most imminent and affrighting dangers they gave place to fear or doubt; as when in a great tempest, the ship being even covered with waves, they being afraid, cried out, *Lord save us, we perish*; he said unto them, *τί δειλοί ἐστε, ὀλιγόπιστοι; Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?* And when St. Peter, walking upon waves, and beginning to sink, his heart mis-giving, in like manner cried out, *Lord save me*; our Lord also reproves him with an *ὀλιγόπιστε τί ἐδίστασας; O thou of little faith, why didst thou doubt?* whence we both learn, that it is our want or weakness of faith, which make us in our greatest needs ready to sink; and that it is not excusable for us in the extremity of danger to doubt of God's protection and succour. Farther,

8. This consideration affordeth comfort and encouragement unto us, in the undertaking and prosecution of honest and prudent enterprises, giving us to hope confidently for success, how difficult or dangerous soever it appear unto us; all difficulties and improbabilities vanishing before that omnipotency which abetteth and backeth such endeavours; the which is by faith imparted and appropriated unto us; so that we (with St. Paul) are able to do all things by God strengthening us. Nothing is so high or difficult (if just and reasonable) which a resolute faith in the divine power cannot easily surmount and achieve: A word, seconded therewith, can transplant trees, and transfer mountains any whither: *If ye (saith our Lord) have faith as a grain of mustard-seed, ye shall say to this mountain, be thou removed hence to yonder place, and it shall be removed: Ye may say to this sycamine tree, be thou plucked up by the roots, and be thou planted in the sea, and it shall obey you; καὶ ἐδὲν ἀδυνατήσει ὑμῖν; and there is nothing (adds our Saviour) which shall be impossible unto you;* for, as he saith again, *All things are possible to him that believeth*; that is, unto him who relieth upon the divine power; for that the Faith he speaks of referreth thither, appeareth by several like passages in the Gospel; as for instance, in that where, to the blind men imploring his relief, our Lord puts this question: *Do ye believe that I can do this?* and they answering, *Yes Lord*; he thereupon replies, *According to your faith be it done unto you.* In contemplation of this power, we may, if our duty or good reason do call us forth, how small or weak soever in our selves, how destitute soever of defensive arms, or offensive weapons, naked and unarmed, with a sling and a stone, go out against the biggest and best armed Philistine, nothing doubtful of victory; it will be enough, if we can say with David, *I come unto thee in the name of the Lord of hosts*; that is, confiding in his powerful help, as my invincible weapon and defence. But so much for this particular.

III. That notion of the word Almighty, which implieth God's being universal proprietary and possessour of all things, hath likewise many good uses; we shall only name them, without enlarging upon them: We thence learn,

1. That we our selves are not our own, and therefore ought to submit our selves with content and patience to God's disposal; for that (as it is in the Gospel) God may do what he pleaseth with his own. Whence also we are bound (as St. Paul enjoineeth us) to glorify God with our bodies and spirits, which are God's.

2. That also therefore we ought to be content with that portion of accommodations here which God alloweth us; for that since every thing is his, we can claim nothing to our selves; all we have doth proceed from mere liberality and bounty.

3. The

3. The same reason obligeth us to be satisfied, whenever providence withdraweth what it did afford us the enjoyment of; for God doth never so communicate any thing, as to devest himself of the paramount title and propriety therein: all things have an immutable relation to him as Lord, and cannot be alienated from him; whence he may justly, when he pleaseth, recal or resumeth them into his hand. Job 1. 21.

4. Yea hence we are obliged to be heartily thankful for all we ever have or enjoy; for that nothing is upon any account ours, or can be due to us from him; all proceeding from pure kindness and goodness.

5. We are hence obliged carefully to manage and employ all which is put into our hands, for his interest and service, as honest tenants and faithful stewards; making just returns and improvements; not embezzelling nor abusing any of his goods committed to us.

6. Lastly, we may learn hence to be humble and sober; not to be conceited, or elevated in mind, or apt to glory, in regard to any thing we have; since we have nothing that we can justly esteem, or properly call, our own.

IV. That sense, according to which the word doth signify God's containing all things by his immense presence, is also of most excellent use and influence upon our practice. We thereby may learn with what care and circumspection, with what reverence and modesty, with what innocence and integrity we ought always and in all places, to manage our conversation and behaviour; since we continually do think, and speak, and act in the immediate presence, and under the inspection of God; whose eyes are upon the ways of man, and he seeth all his goings; who searcheth and trieth our hearts, and possesseth our reins; who encompasseth our path, and is acquainted with all our ways; to whose eyes all things are naked and dissected; according to the significant and emphatical expressions of Scripture. Did we stand in the sight of our King, we should not dare to behave our selves rudely and indecently; were a virtuous person conscious of our doings, we should be ashamed to do any base or filthy thing; the oversight of a grave or a wise person would restrain us from practising vanities and impertinencies; how much more should the glorious Majesty of the most wise and holy God, being ever present to all our thoughts, words and actions, if duly considered and reflected upon, keep us within awe and compass? how can we, if we remember that we abide always in a temple sanctified by God's presence; not contain our selves in a careful and devout posture of soul?

This consideration also prompteth us to frequent addresses of prayer, thanksgiving, and all kind of adoration toward God: for all reason dictateth it to be unseemly to be in his presence with our back turned unto him; without demonstrations of regard and reverence to him; without answering him when he speaketh to us; that is, without corresponding to the invitations, which he frequently by his providence maketh to us, of conversing with him, of seeking his favour, and imploring his help, and returning thanks for his mercies.

V. Lastly, the consideration that God doth uphold all things, and consequently our selves, in being, may upon several good accounts be influential upon our practice; particularly it may powerfully deter us from offending and displeasing him: for put case our life, our livelihood, all the conveniencies and comforts of our being should wholly depend upon the bounty and pleasure of any person, should we not be very wary and fearful to affront, or injure, or displease such a person? It is in the highest degree so with us in respect to God; and why are we so inconsiderate, that the same reason hath not the same effect upon us?

This consideration also should mind us how infinitely we are obliged to the goodness of God, who when he may by the bare withdrawing his conservative influence utterly destroy us, and suffer us to fall to nothing, doth notwithstanding our many provocations, the many neglects and injuries he receiveth from us, continually preserve us in his hand, and every moment imparteth a new being to us, for which, and all his infinite mercies and favours toward us, let us for ever yield unto him all thanks and praise. *Amen.*

Maker of Heaven and Earth

SERMON XII.

ACTS IV. 24.

O Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven and earth; and the sea; and all that in them is.

IT may be demanded, why besides that of *Almighty*; no other Attribute of God is express'd in our *Creed*? why for instance, the perfections of infinite *wisdom* and *goodness* are therein omitted? I answer,

Adv. Marc.
cap. 3.

1. That all such perfections are included in the notion of a God, whom when we profess to believe, we consequently do ascribe them to him (implicitly.) For he that should profess to believe in God, not acknowledging those perfections, would be inconsistent and contradictory to himself. *Deum negaret* (as *Tertullian* speaks) *auferendo quod Dei est*. He would deny God, by withdrawing what belongs to God.

2. The title *παντοκράτωρ*, as implying God's universal providence in the preservation and government of the world, doth also involve or infer all divine perfections displayed therein; all that glorious majesty and excellency, for which he is with highest respect to be honoured and worshipped by us, which added to the name of God, doth determine what God we mean, such as doth in all perfection excel, and with it doth govern the world.

3. I may add *thirdly*, That the Doctrine of God's universal providence being not altogether so evident to natural light, as those attributes discovered in the making of the world (more having doubted thereof, and disputed against it with much more plausibility) it was therefore convenient to add it; as a matter of Faith clearly and fully (as we did shew) attested unto by divine Revelation. So much may suffice to remove such a scruple concerning the fulness and sufficiency of the *Creed* in that particular. I proceed:

MAKER OF HEAVEN AND EARTH.

This clause is one of those, which was of later times inserted into the *Creed*; none of the most antient Expositours thereof (*Austin*, *Ruffin*, *Maximus Taurinensis*, *Chrysologus*, &c.) taking any notice thereof. But *Irenaus*, *Tertullian*, and other most antient Writers, in their Rules of Faith, exhibit their sense thereof, and the Confessions of all General Councils (the *Nicene*, and those after it) express it. And there is great reason for it; not only thereby to disavow and decry those prodigious errors of *Marcion*, *Manichæus*, and other such *Hereticks*, which did then ascribe the creation of the world (or of some parts thereof, seeming to their fancy less good and perfect) to another God or Principle inferiour in worth and goodness to that God which was revealed in the Gospel; or did opionate two principles (not distinct only, but contrary one to the other) from one whereof good things did proceed, from the other bad things were derived: But for that the creation of the world (which the

holy

holy Confessors of Christ do here in the Text ascribe unto God) is that peculiarly august and admirable work, by which we learn that He is, and in good measure what He is; by which, I say, the existence of God is most strongly demonstrated, and in which his divine perfections are most conspicuously displayed; which is the prime foundation of his authority over the world, and consequently the chief ground of all natural Religion; of our just subjection, our reasonable duty, our humble devotion toward him. The title, *Creatour of heaven and earth*, is that also, which most especially characterizes and distinguishes the God whom we believe and adore from all false and fictitious Deities; for, as the Psalmist sings, *All the gods of the nations are but idols, but the Lord made the heavens*: and, *Thou* (prayeth Hezekiah) *art the God, thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth, thou hast made heaven and earth*: and, *The gods* (saith the Prophet Jeremy) *that have not made the heavens and the earth, they shall perish from the earth, and from under the heavens*: and, *We preach unto you* (said St. Paul to the ignorant Lycaonians) *that ye should turn from those vanities unto the living God, which made heaven and earth*. It is therefore a point, which worthily hath been inserted into all *Creeds*, and Confessions of our Faith, as a necessary object of our belief; and 'tis indeed a subject no less wholesome and fruitful, than high and noble; deserving that we employ our best thoughts and most careful attention upon it: to the commemoration thereof God consecrated the great Sabbatical Festivity among his ancient people; nor should even the consideration of the great works concerning our Redemption abolish the remembrance of it: to confer some advantage thereto, we shall now so discourse thereon, as first to propound some Observations explicative thereof, and conducing to our information about it, then to apply the consideration thereof to practice.

We may first observe, that the ancient *Hebrews* having, as it seems, in their Language no one Word properly signifying the *World*, or universal frame and complex of things created (that *Système*, as the Author *de Mundo* defines it, consisting of heaven and earth, and the natures contained in them) did, for to express it, use a collection of its chief parts (chief absolutely in themselves, or such in respect to us) *the heaven*, and *the earth*, adding sometimes, because of the word *earth* its ambiguity, the *sea* also; yea sometimes, for fuller explication, subjoining to *heaven* its *host*, to *earth* its *fulness*, to the *sea* its *contents*. So, *In six days the Lord made heaven and earth*, saith Moses: and, *Do not I fill heaven and earth*, saith the Lord? (in Jeremy:) and, *It is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than for one tittle of the law to fail*, saith our Saviour: and, *God*, saith St. Paul, *who made the world, and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth* (where the *World*, and *all things therein*, do signify the same with *heaven and earth*; he first uses the word (*world*) which the Greek language afforded, then adds the circumlocution, whereby the *Hebrews* did express it.) By *heaven and earth* therefore we are, I say, to understand those two regions superiour and inferiour, into which the whole systeme of things is divided, together with all the beings that do reside in them, or do belong unto them, or are comprehended by them; as we see fully expressed in our Text, and otherwhere; particularly with utmost distinction by the Angel in the *Apocalypse*, who swears by him that *liveth for ever, who created the heaven, and the things that are therein; and the earth with the things that therein are, and the sea with the things therein*.

By *heaven* then is understood all the superiour Region encompassing the Globe of earth, and from it on all sides extended to a distance unconceivably vast and spacious, with all its parts and furniture, and inhabitants; not only such things in it as are visible and material, but also those which are immaterial and invisible: so we are plainly taught by St. Paul: *By him* (saith he) *were created all things which are in heaven, and which are in earth, both those that are visible, and those that are invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers, all things were created by him, and for him*; that is, not only the material and sensible parts, or contents of heaven (those bright and beautiful lamps exposed to our view, with the fluid matter in which they may

- be conceived to float or swim) but those Beings of a more pure and refined substance, and thence indiscernible to our sense, however eminent in nature, mighty in power, exalted in dignity, whose ordinary residence and *proper habitation* (their ἰδιὸν οἰκητήριον, as St. Jude termeth it) is in those superiour Regions; in that they are Courtiers and domestick Officers of God (whose throne and special presence, or the place where he more peculiarly and amply discovereth himself, and displayeth his glory, is in heaven) attending upon him, and ministring to him; *encircling his throne* (as it is in the *Revelation*) and *always* (as our Saviour telleth us) *beholding his face*; Even these all were made by God: The time indeed when, and the manner how those invisible sublime creatures were made, is not in the history of the Creation, or otherwhere, manifestly expressed (because perhaps it doth exceed the capacity, or doth not sute the condition of man to understand them; or because it doth not much concern us, or not much conduceth to our edification to know them) but that they were made by God, and that when we call God the *maker of heaven*, they are comprehended, as the creatures of God dwelling there, is evidently declared in Scripture: for beside the
- Jude 6. forementioned clear and full place of St. Paul, the Angel forecited in the *Revelation* saith, that God *created the heaven, & all things in it*; and in our Text it is said, that God *made heaven and all things in it* (ποίησεν τὰ ἐν αὐτῷ) which plainly includeth the Angels; if all things in it, then surely the Angels, who are often expressed to be in heaven, being indeed the principal and most considerable things therein. And, *Thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host* (pray the Levites in *Nehemiah*) where according to the Jews notion, who say there are three heavens; *Cælum nubiliferum*, or the Firmament; *Cælum astriferum*, the (starry) Heavens; *Cælum angeliferum*, or the Heaven of Heavens, where the Angels reside (the third heaven in St. Paul;) by the hosts of heaven, are meant the Angels; as also the hosts of God do seem to signify in the 103. Psalm, where 'tis said, *Bless the Lord ye his angels, that excel in strength, that do his commandments, hearken- ing unto the voice of his word; Bless ye the Lord all his hosts, ye ministers of his, that do his pleasure*. Whence they are termed *the sons of God*; as where in Job Pl. 89. & 29. 1. 'tis said, *There was a day, when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord*; and in several other places: And St. Jude telleth us of the laps'd Angels, that they did not retain *τὸ ἐκκλῆν ἀρχῶν*, their beginning, or primitive State; wherefore they had a beginning, and whence could they have that, but from God, who alone is eternal; *who alone* originally, intrinsically and necessarily hath, as St. Paul saith, *immortality*; and consequently alone [as Aristotle by several arguments proveth against Plato] hath eternity. The Angels also are subject to God's jurisdiction and governance, which argueth their proceeding from him, and dependance upon him. In fine the Psalmist reckons them among the works of God; for having said, *Bless the Lord, ye his angels*; and, *Bless the Lord all ye his hosts*; he recapitulating and concluding subjoins, *Bless the Lord all his works in all places of his dominions*; and again, in the 148. Psalm, summoning all the creation to a consort of doxology, he begins with the heavens, then proceeds to the earth, making a very particular recitation of the chief parts and inhabitants belonging to each; and in the first place mentioning the angels, then the stars, then the heaven of heavens; he subjoinech the reason why they ought all to praise God: *Let them* (saith he) *praise the name of the Lord, for he commanded, and they were created; he hath also established them for ever and ever; he hath made a decree, which shall not pass*. Thus we are by divine revelation instructed concerning the existence and original of those heavenly invisible beings, to the knowledge of whom, that they are, what they are, whence they are, natural light could not reach; although from the reliques of primitive Tradition even the Pagans themselves commonly in part did acknowledge this truth, calling all the inferiour or secondary Gods, whom they conceived to converse together happily (ἐν τῷ ἀνωτάτω τόπῳ) in the highest place above (as Aristotle saith) in subjection to God, and attendance on him, the
- The Greek Fathers commonly (and St. Hierom after them) conceived they were made before the creation of this material world: St. Austin thinks them meant under Fiat lux. De Civ. D. 11. 9.
- Διδ. τὸ τοῖς ἀστρονόμοις ἔτι καὶ νηπιόις καὶ τῷ γένει ἀνεπιτήδεον. Bas. Hexem. 1.
- Ἐῶτα δεύτερον τῆ πρώτης φωτὸς ἀπαργασματα. Naz. Orat. 43.
- 1 Tim. 6. 16. Arist. de Cælo, 1. 1. 1.
- Plal. 103. 20, &c.
- Arist. de Cælo, 1. 3. Polit. 1. 1.

Κοινὴ δὲ αὖ οὐσικῶν ἐστὶν γίγνε-
σθαι ἐκ τοῦ μὴ οὐθέν. Τὸ γιγνώμενον ἐκ
τοῦ μὴ οὐτὸν γίγνεσθαι ἀδύνατον. καὶ
ἡ ταύτης ὁμογενεῖα οὐδὲ δόξης πάν-
τες οἱ φιλοσοφῶντες. Physl. 1. 4. 8. Vid.
de Gener. & Corrup. 1. 3. & Me-
taph. 1. 1, 3.

Physl. 1. 9.

Ἀεὶ ὅτι τι δ' ὑπάρχειται, ἐξ ἧς γίγνεται
τὸ γιγνώμενον, οὐκ ἐκ τοῦ οὐτά, καὶ τὰ
ζῶα ἐκ σπέρματος. Physl. 1. 8.

Erit aliquid quod aut ex nihilo oria-
tur, aut in nihilum subito occidat; quia
hoc Physicus dixit unquam? Cic. de
Divin. 2.

Ἀδύνατον
τῷ ἀνθρώ-
πῳ πῶς οὐ-
τὸν δὲ δὲ
δημιουργίαν
κατασκευά-
σαι. Chrysl.
in Gen. λογ.
6.

Ἐπεμβαίνειν οὐκ εἶναι μέτρον. Chrysl.
— hoc est, modum conditionis sua
transgredi, nec intelligere quousque ho-
mini liceat accedere. Lact.

Opera ipsius videntur oculis, quomodo
autem illa fecerit, ne mente quidem vi-
deretur. Lact. 2.

was produced: *It is* (saith he) *the common opinion of natu-
ralists, that nothing can be made out of nothing; and, That it
is impossible, that any thing should proceed from nothing, all
that have studied about nature do consent: which principle
Aristotle himself not only admits, but extends farther, af-
firming it impossible that any thing should be produced out
of matter not pre-disposed to admit the form, which is to be
produced; ἡδὲ γίνεται ὅτι ἐκ ἑκά ἑκά ἐν, Neither can* (saith he) *every
thing be made of every thing, but of some subject fitted
thereto (or susceptible thereof) as animals and plants out of
their seed. Which principles deduced from the observing
natural effects, or works of art performed always by alte-
rations, additions, subtractions or transpositions of some*

matter subjacent, we may safely in respect only to such kinds of effects, pro-
ceeding in the ordinary course of nature, admit; allowing no natural agent,
no created artificer sufficient to produce any thing without some matter or sub-
ject aptly qualified and prepared to receive its influence; but from hence to
conclude universally, that every action possible doth require a matter pre-
existent, or a pre-disposed subject, is no-wise reasonable: because such a thing
doth not usually according to the course of nature happen; because there is no
cause obvious that can perform so much; because we are not acquainted with
the manner or way of doing such a thing; that therefore the thing is in it self
absolutely impossible, is no warrantable argumentation. No Logick will al-
low us from particular experiments to establish general conclusions, especially
such as do concern the determination of what is absolutely impossible; that
must be fetched from abstracted notions of reason, not from singular appearan-
ces to sense; there may be for all that we (we pitifully short-sighted creatures
in this our dark state) can by any means know, agents of another sort, and
powers in manner of efficacy much differing from all those which come within
the narrow compass of our observation. Especially to imagine, that the su-
preme Being, who made the world in a manner, whatever that manner were,
incomprehensible, cannot himself act otherwise than we see these inferiour
things (not only infinitely lower in degree, but wholly different in nature) do
act, is grossly vain and unreasonable: *It is impossible* (saith St. Chrysostom well)
for man's nature by curious enquiry to penetrate the workmanship of God. From
sense or experience then such conclusions cannot well be derived; it assures us
that some effects are possible, but cannot help us to determine what is impos-
sible. Neither are there any certain principles of reason, from whence it may
be collected, that it is impossible, that some substances should be totally pro-
duced *de novo*, or receive completely an existence, which they had not before:
That no such principles are innate to our minds (if indeed there be at all any innate
principles which some Philosophers deny) every man's experience can tell him;
neither do these Philosophers alledge any such; nor (as we before shewed) can
any such be drawn from experience. If they say, the proposition is *αὐτόματος*, or
evidently credible of it self, without any proof, 'tis a precarious and groundless
assertion, such as ought not to be admitted in any science, or any disceptation;
except they can shew that the terms of these propositions (or of the like equi-
valent ones) *A substance is producible altogether de novo; A substance may
exist, which did not exist; Something may be produced out of nothing;* do
involve a contradiction; which it rather is evident they do not, there being
nothing contained in the notion of substance inconsistent with such a produc-
tibility, or with novelty of existence, no more than there is in the notion of
figure, or of motion, which things no man hardly denies to receive a new
existence. In fine, nothing is more reasonable than to confess, that our reason

can no-wise reach the extent of all powers, and all possi-
bilities; and that we much (as St. Chrysostome speaks) do
transgress our measures and bounds, if we pretend to know
what things God is able to produce, or how he doth pro-
duce any: *His works* (as Lactantius speaketh) *are seen with
eyes, but how he made them, the mind it self cannot see.*

Those

Those opinions therefore of the ancient Philosophers, that the matter of the world (or of natural things) was eternal and necessarily pre-existent, and that there could be no creation out of nothing, were assumed altogether without any clear or sure foundation. We may say unto them, as our Lord did once say to the Sadducees, *Ye err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God.* Matt. 22. 29. *The poverty and narrowness of man's natural understanding* (not going usually beyond matters obvious to sense) *and their inability by the meanness of their reason to look up to the height of truth, did* (as St. Basil says) *deceive them.* And that these opinions (revived and embraced by divers persons in our days) are false, and contrary to our Faith, that in truth all the matter of things both could be, and really was created by God, may from several reasons appear :

Ἐξηπάτησεν αὐτὸς τὸ ἀνθρώπινον οὐσέως ἢ πονηρίᾳ---ἐδυνάμει δὲ διὰ λογισμῶν ταπεινότητι πρὸς τὸ ὑψι-ἀπιδεῖν τὴν ἀληθείαν. Bas. hexaem. hom. 6.

1. It is often in general terms affirmed in Scripture, that God did make all things; all things in heaven and earth. Now it is unsafe, and never without urgent reason allowable, to make limitations or restrictions of universal propositions, especially of such as are frequently and constantly thus set down : And, like as St. Paul somewhere discourses; because it is said in the Prophets, *Every one that believeth in him, shall not be ashamed;* and, *whosoever shall call upon the Lord, shall be saved;* therefore both Jews and Greeks, in case of their belief and invocation of God, are capable of acceptance and salvation; *ἐπεὶ γὰρ ἓν διὰ πολλῶν*, for that there is no distinction or exception made : So it being said universally, and unlimitedly, that all things were made, and no reason appearing which compels to restrain that universality, therefore the matter of things was also made; the matter being one thing, yea in the opinion of most Philosophers, as well ancient as modern, the principal thing, the only substantial thing in nature; all other things being only modes, affections or relations thereof. Whence Aristotle telleth us, that most of the first Philosophers did affirm nothing at all really to be made, and nothing ever to be destroyed; because matter did always subsist and abide the same, as if no other thing beside in nature had any being considerable. If God therefore did not produce matter it self, he could hardly be accounted author of any thing in nature, so far would he be from being truly affirmed the maker of all things : Upon this ground Cicero (as Lactantius cites him) denied that God was the Authour of any of the Elements : *It is not probable,* said he, *that the matter, whence all things did arise, was made by divine Providence;* and, *if matter was not made by God, then neither earth, nor water, nor air, nor fire were made by him;* to invert which discourse, we say, that God did make all these things (*Earth, Sea, Fire, and Air*) as the Holy Scripture frequently asserts, wherefore the matter of them was also his work : he was not only (as St. Basil speaks) *an inventour of figures* (or a raiser of motions) *but the maker of nature it self,* and of all that is substantial therein.

Rom. 10. 11, &c.

Arist. Phys. 1. 8. Metaph. 1. 3.

Primum igitur non est probabile eam materiam rerum unde orta sunt omnia, esse divinâ Providentiâ effectam, sed habere & habuisse vim, & naturam suam : —Quod si non est à Deo materia facta, nè terra quidem, & aqua, & aer, & ignis à Deo factus est. Cic. apud Lactant. 2. pag. 150.

Ὁ θεὸς—ἐχὶ σφαιμάτων ὄντων ἐφεστῆς, ἀλλ' αὐτῆς τῆς οὐσέως αὐτῶν δημιουργός. Bas. hex. 6.

2. Again, God is in scripture affirmed to be the true proprietary, and possessor of all things, none excepted; how so, if he did not make them? for *He that did not make, cannot* (as J. Martyr argues) *have any right to that which is not made.* It is the argument, by which the Scripture frequently proves God to be the owner and disposer of things, because he made them : *The earth* (saith the Psalmist) *is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof, the world, and they that dwell therein;* for *he hath founded it upon the seas, and prepared it upon the floods.* So, because (we may say) he did produce matter, and doth sustain its being; therefore he (by the most excellent sort, and upon the best ground of right) doth own it, and may justly use it at his pleasure; otherwise might we not say with Tertullian? *If God did not make matter, he using a thing not his own, because not made by him, either he used it precariously as needing it, or injuriously, as usurping upon it by force.*

Τὸ γὰρ μὴ πεποιηκὸς ἐδεμῖα ἐξουσία πρὸς τὸ μὴ γεγενῆς. Just. M. Cohort. ad Gr. 1. p. 22.

Psal. 24. 1. Gen. 14. 19. Deut. 10. 14.

—de alieno usus aut precario usus est, quâ egeus ejus, aut injuriâ, quâ prevalens ejus. Tert. adv. Hermog. 9.

3. The supposing any thing to be eternal, uncreated, and independent upon God doth advance that Being in those respects unto an equality with God, imparting thereto so great and divine Attributes: *It will become* (as St. Basil saith) *God's peer, or equal in dignity, being dignified with the same privileges.* That supposition likewise in effect depriveth God of those special perfections, Independency, and All-sufficiency; making him in his operations, and performances to depend upon, and to be in a manner subject unto

Nemo non eget eo, re cuius utitur; nemo non subicitur ei, cuius eget ut possit uti; Et nemo qui prestat de sua uti, non in hoc superior est eo, cui prestat uti. Tert. adv. Herm. 4. 5.

Quantum Deus possit; materiam ipse sibi formet; an data utatur; utrum idea materia prius superveniat, an materia idea; Deus quicquid vult efficiat, an in multis rebus illum tractanda destituant; Et à magno artifice prave formantur multa, non quia cessat ars, sed quia id in quo exercetur saepe inobsequens arti est. Sen. pref. Nat. Qu.

matter; to need its concurrence; and to be unable to perform any thing farther than it admits: for, *None* (as Tertullian discourseth) *is free from needing that, whose stock he useth; none is exempt from subjection to that, which he needs that he may use; and none, who lends of his own to use, is not in this superiour to him, to whom he lends it for use:* the very doubting about this made Seneca put such absurd, and impious questions, as these: *How God's power is limited; whether he effects whatever he pleaseth, or is disappointed by want of matter; whether he doth not form many things ill, not from defect of art in himself, but from disobedience of the subject-matter:* which questions we easily resolve by saying, Nothing is impossible to God; his will

can never be crossed, or disappointed; he can never do any thing bad, or imperfect in its kind; because he createth matter it self, answerable to his design.

4. As Aristotle well discoursed against the ancient Philosophers, who before Anaxagoras did assign but one Principle of things, a material and passive one, as if no active principle were required; so may we argue against him, and them together. If God did produce, and insert an active principle into nature (as who can imagine those admirable works of nature, the seminal propagation, and nutrition of plants, and however more especially the generation, motion, sense, fancy, appetite, passion of animals to be accomplished by a mere passive agitation of matter, without some active principle distinct from matter, which disposeth, and determineth it to the production of such effects?) if God could, I say, produce, and insert such an active Principle (such an *entelechia*, as the Philosopher calleth it,) why might he not as well produce a passive one, such as the matter is? what greater difficulty could he find in doing it?

5. Yea farther, If God hath produced immaterial beings, or simple, and uncompounded substances distinct from matter, such as Angels, and the souls of men, merely out of nothing (for out of what pre-existent stuff could they be made?) then may he as well create matter out of nothing; for what greater difficulty can we conceive in creating so much lower, and more imperfect a thing, than in creating those more excellent substances, so much fuller as it were of entity, or so far more removed from nothing? if any one thing is producible out of nothing, why may not all things capable of

Cur non omnia ex nihilo, si aliquid ex nihilo; nisi si insufficiens fuit divina virtus omnibus producendis, quæ aliquid protulerit ex nihilo? Tertull. adv. Herm. 15.

existence be so produced by a competent, and omnipotent virtue? *Why not* (as Tertullian argued) *all things out of nothing, if any thing out of nothing; except if the divine virtue, which drew somewhat out of nothing, was insufficient to produce all things thence?* But that such immaterial substances were produced by God, we before from many

plain testimonies of divine revelation did shew; and particularly the souls of men are produced from God's breath, or by the efficacy of his word.

6. The manner of God's making the world express'd in Scripture, by mere will and command, (*He spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast; he commanded, and they were created*) that only by uttering the word *fiat* (not audibly, but mentally, that is by an act of volition) all things should be formed and constituted in their specific natures and perfections, doth argue, that matter, or any other thing possible, might easily by the divine power be produced out of nothing. Likewise effecting miracles superiour, or contrary to the law and course of nature, without any preparatory

Psal. 33. 9.
148. 5.

ry dispositions induced into the fuscipient matter, in the same manner, by mere willing, saying, or commanding, whereof there be in the Scripture frequent instances, doth persuade the same; *Θέλω, καθαρίσθαι, I will, be thou cleansed: Woman, great is thy faith, γυνήτιω σοι, ὡς θέλεις, be it to thee, as* Luke 5. 13. *thou desirest: νεανίσκε, σοι λέγω ἐγέρθητι, young man, I say to thee, Wake, from the sleep of death; So did our Saviour speak, and the effect immediately followed; whereby as he demonstrated his divine power, so he declared the manner whereby divine power doth incomprehensibly operate in the production of things; and that it therein no-wise dependeth upon matter: for it is no-wise harder, or more impossible to produce matter it self, than to produce a form therein without, or against an aptitude to receive it: nay it seemeth more difficult to raise children unto Abraham out of stones, than to draw them out of nothing; there, being a positive obstacle to be removed; here, no apparent resistance; there, as well somewhat preceding to be destroyed, as somewhat new to be produced; here, only somewhat simply to be produced: especially considering, as we said, that God useth no other means, instruments or applications in these productions, than his bare word or command; which there is no reason, why we should not conceive as able immediately to make the matter, as to produce the forms of things.*

7. Lastly, The Holy Text, describing the manner and order of the creation, doth insinuate this truth. *The Scripture (saith Tertullian well) doth first pronounce the earth to be made, then setteth out its quality; as likewise first professing the heaven made, it in the sequel doth superinduce its disposition. In the beginning (saith Moses) God made heaven and earth; now the earth was without form; that is, it seems, God at first did make the matter of heaven and earth devoid of all form and order, a confused and unshapen mass; then he digested, and distinguished the parts of them, by several steps orderly raising thence all those various kinds, and well arrayed hosts of goodly creatures: First he made the stones and timber, and all requisite materials; then did he rear and frame this stately fabrick: So the words do sound, and may well be understood.*

Scriptura terram primò factam edicit, dehinc qualitatem ipsius edisserit; sicut & cælum primò factum professa dehinc dispositionem ejus superinducit. Tertull. contra Hermog. 26.

Τὴν ἔλνν περὸ ποσῆσας εἰδοποίησεν ὕστερον, ἐκδοσὶν τὰ ἐν αὐτῇ σχήματα, καὶ μέγεθος περὶ αὐτῆς. Greg. Naz. Or. 43.

From these Premisses we may conclude, against those Philosophers, who destitute of the light of revelation did conceit otherwise, and against those Christians, who have followed the Philosophers (as *Hermogenes* of old, and *Volkelius* of late, together with the Sectatours of their opinions) that God did create (in the most strict and scholastical sense of that word, did create) that is, either immediately, or mediately did produce out of nothing, or did bestow entirely a new existence unto every thing, which is, not excepting any one; and that is the sense of the words, having *Made heaven and earth*; or of the Title, *Maker of heaven and earth* ascribed unto God.

Which Title, as all sober Christians have always acknowledged, and the holy Oracles do most plainly avouch due to the one true God alone (for, *To us there is but one God, the Father, from whom are all things*) so there were divers Hereticks of old, *Marcion* and others of the *Gnostick* crew, who contradicted it; affirming that the God of the Old Testament, who made the world, and enacted the ancient Law, whom *Moses* and the *Prophets* did declare, was not the same God with him, from whom the Gospel proceeded, and who preached therein; the *Mosaick* God being a worse condition'd God, fierce and rigid, angry and implacable, delighting in wars and mischiefs; but the *Evangelical* God, the Father of our Lord, being mild and gentle, void of all wrath and spleen; very indulgent and beneficent: Of kin to that fancy of *Marcion* was the error of the *Manichees*; who supposed two first causes of things; from one whereof good, from the other evil did fatally proceed; which conceit it seems they drew from the *Persian*, *Egyptian*, or other *Ethnical* Doctrines; the which we

*Prædicat hic duos esse Patres, divisæque regna:
Esse mali causam Dominum, qui condidit orbem;
Quique figuravit carnem spiramine vivam;
Quique dedit legem, & vatum qui vocis locutus;
Hunc negat esse bonum, justum tamen esse fatetur,
Crudelem, durum, belli cui sava voluptas,
Judicio horrendum, precibus mansuescere nullis:
Esse alium suadens, nulli qui cognitus unquam;
Hunc ait esse bonum, nullum qui judicat æquè,
Sed spargit cunctis vitam, non invidet ulli.*
Adv. Marc. Poëm. 1.
have

Plut. de Iside, & Osiride.

Aug. de Civ. Dei. XX. V. cum Lud.

Vive.

Laërtius in proœmio.

Plato de Leg. X.

Eusebius de Prep. 24.

Arist. Metaph. IV. I.

Simplic. in Epict.

have recited by *Plutarch* in his discourse about *Isis*, and *Osiris*: The *Persian Magi* (saide he) had their *Oromazes*, and *Avimanius*; the *Egyptians* their *Osiris*, and *Typhon*; the *Chaldeans* their good, and bad *Planets*; the *Greeks* their *Zeus*, and *Hades*; the *Pythagoreans* their *Monas*, and *Dyas*; *Empedocles* his concord and discord, &c. the like report we have in divers other Writers: The common reason, or ground upon which these erroneous conceits were built,

was this; there appearing to be in nature some things imperfect, and some things bad (as ill dispositions, inclinations and passions of mind, ill tempers and diseases of body, attended with pains and troubles in life; vices, discords, deformities, antipathies, irregularities, monsters, poisons, and the like things dispersed in nature) this sort of things, they supposed could not proceed from perfect goodness, the fountain of what was good, lovely, orderly, convenient, pleasant and desirable: If (discourseth

Plutarch, expressing the main of their argument) *nothing can naturally arise without a cause, and good cannot afford causality to evil, it is necessary that nature should have a proper seed and principle of evil as well as good; and thus it seems to the most and wisest, for they indeed conceive two Gods as it were counterplotting each other; one the contri-*

ver and producer of good things, and the other of bad; calling the better One God, the other Demon. But this discourse hath two faulty suppositions: It supposeth some things to be imperfect and evil, which are not truly such; and, to those things, which are truly such, it assigneth an imaginary and wrong cause:

1. It supposeth some Beings according to their original nature and constitution to be evil and imperfect; which supposition is, I say, false; for there is no sort of creature, which did not at first pass the divine approbation: *Gen. i. 31. God saw every thing which he had made, and behold it was very good:* Good, that is, convenient and suitable to its design (or its Authour's *Idea*) fair and decent in its place, according to its proportion; very good, that is, perfect and complete in its degree, without any defect, blemish or flaw; not liable to any reasonable blame or exception. There are indeed among the

creatures some degrees of perfection (it was fit there should be so in great variety, that things might by comparison illustrate and commend one another; that there might be regular subordinations, and subserviencies, and harmonies; that several faculties of intelligent creatures might be ex-

ercised, and improved, and delighted; that the *πολυποικίλη σοφία*, the manifold or multiform *Wisdom* of the Creatour might be displayed, acknowledged and celebrated; there are, I say, for such purposes in nature creatures gradually different in excellency) whence some things may be said comparatively imperfect, or rather less excellent and noble in respect to other things, endued with higher faculties, or (as they be sometimes called) perfections of nature; some things are less active, and more passive than others; are not so capable of enjoyments delectable unto, and more subject to impressions distastful to their particular nature; which passivities and displeasures are not simply evils, because they do fute the degree of the particular natures of those subjects, being also ever over-balanced with other pleasing activities and enjoyments: so have things different measures of excellency, but nothing as it comes from God's hand, or stands in its rank in nature, is positively imperfect, or void of that perfection, which is due to its kind; much less is any creature absolutely bad, that is ugly, or noxious, or troublesome, or cumbersome to the Universe; so that it were better away out of it, than in it. *God* (saith the *Hebrew Wise-man*) *created all things, that they might have their being, and the generations of the world were healthful, and there is no poison of destruction in them.* Every thing contributes somewhat to the use and benefit, or to the beauty and ornament of the whole: No weed grows out of the earth, no insect creeps upon the ground which hath not its elegance, and yields

— Εἰ γὰρ ἔστιν ἀναντίας πέφυκε γενέ-
σθαι, ἀενάαν δὲ καὶ τὸ ἀγαθὸν ἐν αὐ-
τῷ ὄντι, δὲ γίνεσθαι ἰδίαν καὶ ἀσχετὴν
ὡς περὶ ἀγαθὸν, καὶ κακὸν τὸ αὐτὸν, &c.
Plut. de Is. & Osir.

Natura omnes quoniam sunt, & ideo
habent modum suum, speciem suam, &
quandam secum pacem suam, profectio
bona sunt. Aug. de Civ. D. XII.

yields not its profit; nothing is abominable, or despicable, though all things are not alike amiable and admirable; there is therefore nothing in all the compass of nature unfit, or unworthy to have proceeded from God; nothing which he becomingly, without derogation to his excellencies, may not own for his work; nothing which in its rank and degree doth not confer to the manifestation of his glorious power, admirable wisdom, and excellent goodness: O Lord (cried the devout *Psalmist* upon particular survey, and consideration of them) *how manifold are thy works, in wisdom hast thou made them all; the earth is full of thy riches!* That which we call *poison*, is such only relatively, being noxious or destructive to one part, but innocent, wholesome and useful to some other part; and never prejudicial to the whole body of things: yea even to that part it self it is commonly beneficial in some case or season; affording, if not continual alimony, yet sometime physick thereto, and serving to expel another poison, or mischief more imminently dangerous. That which we call a *monster*, is not unnatural in regard to the whole contexture of causes, but ariseth no less methodically, than any thing most ordinary; and it also hath its good end and use, well serving to illustrate the beauty and convenience of nature's usual course. As for pain and grief incident to the natures of things, without regard to any demerit or justice, they are not properly evils, but adherencies to the less perfect natures of things; in a state liable to which God not only justly, but wisely, according to his pleasure might constitute things for the reasons and ends before insinuated; for no reason obliged him to confer upon every thing extreme perfection; he might dispense his liberalities in what kind and measure he thought good. In fine, the reason of offence we take at any thing of this kind, seeming bad or ugly to us, ariseth from our defect of knowledge and sagacity, we not being able to discern the particular tendency of each thing to the common utility and benefit of the world.

2. But as for those real imperfections and evils truly so called (*which alone, as St. Basil speaketh, are properly evil, and most worthy of the appellation of evils*) habitual distempers of soul, and irregular actions; errors, and vices, and sins, we need not search for any one eternal, or primitive cause of them: Although order, uniformity, beauty and perfection do, yet disorder, confusion, deformity and defect do not argue any unity of cause, whence they should spring; the true causes of them are sufficiently notorious; not the will, or power of a Creatour, but the wilfulness and impotency of creatures are the fountains of them. They are no substantial beings, and so do not need an infinite power to create them, they do hardly need a positive cause; being themselves rather defects, than effects; privations of being, than positive beings: *Let no man* (saith St. *Austin*) *seek an efficient cause of a bad will; for there is no efficient, but a deficient thereof; for that it self is not an effect, but a defection: and, An evil will* (saith he again) *is the efficient cause of an ill work; an evil will hath no cause; that is, none beside it self, or its own deficiency.* And again: *Evil hath no nature, but the loss of good hath received the name of evil: however most certainly the rise and root of sin is our free will and choice; it is* κακὸν βλάστημα προαιρέσεως (as *Cyrril. Hier.* saith) *a bad sprout from our choice.* Men, or other intellectual and free agents their voluntarily averting themselves from the supreme true good to inferiour appearing goods; their wilfully declining from the way which God doth shew and prescribe to them; their rejecting the advices, and disobeying the laws of God; their thwarting the dictates of that reason which God did put in them; their abusing their natural faculties; their perverting

Ἐστὶ τὸ τέρας τῶν παρὰ φύσιν τι-
παρὰ φύσιν δ' ἐπ' αὐτῶν, ἀλλ' ὡς ἐπὶ τῷ
πολλῷ· παρὰ γὰρ τὴν αἰὲν καὶ τὴν ἐξ
ἀνάγκης ἐδὲν γίνεται παρὰ φύσιν.
Arist. de Gen. Anim. 4.

Τῆς τῶν θεῶν δημιουργίας, ὥστε τινες
ἐπόμενοι, καὶ ἀναγκαῖαι φύσεις. Max.
Tyr. XXV.

Divina nos admonet providentia non
res insipienter vituperare, sed utilitatem
rerum diligenter inquirere, Et ubi no-
strum ingenium vel infirmitas deficit,
ibi credere occulta, &c. atque hac ip-
sa aut humilitatis exercitatio est, aut
elationis attritio. Aug. de Civ. Dei II.
22.

Τὰ κακὰ καὶ, ὥστε μάλιστα εἰς
τῆς τῶν κακῶν προσηγορίας ἀξία.
Basil. in Orat. Quod Deus non est author
mali.

Peccatum a
Deo non est,
quia nec est.
Lips.

Nemo quarat efficientem causam mala
voluntatis, non enim est efficiens, sed de-
ficiens; quia nec illa effectio est, sed de-
fectio.

Mala voluntas efficiens est operis mali,
mala autem voluntatis efficiens est nihil.
Aug. de Civ. D. XII. 6, 7.
Mali nulla natura est; sed amissio boni
mali nomen accepit, Aug. de C.D. XI. 9.

Ἀρχὴ καὶ ῥίζα τῆς ἀμαρτίας τὸ ἐφ'
ἡμῶν καὶ αὐτεξέστων. Basil. ubi supr.

Deut. 4. 16. and corrupting themselves, and others also, by ill example, persuasion, all are-
 31. 29. ment, violence; these causes of such evils are most visible and palpable: we
 Gen. 6. 11. need not go far, nor arise to the top of things to find an authour, upon whom
 Exod. 32. 7, we may charge our evils; they are most truly called our *ways*, our *works*,
 &c. our *imaginations*, our *inventions* and *devices*; they are the

Τὴν μοχθηρίαν ἢ τὴν ψυχῆς ἐξουσία
 κυρίως τε καὶ τελεσφορᾷ. Max. Tyr.
 XXV.

Αἰτία ἐλομένης θεὸς ἀναίτιος. Plato
 de Rep. X.

Οὐ γὰρ ἐξ ἑαυτοῦ, μά Ἀδὰ, ἐκ ἐξ
 ἑαυτοῦ. Max. Tyr.

ful Cacodæmon, any eternal Fate to father them upon.

The mischiefs also of pain and grief consequent upon those distempers
 and misdemeanours (*that unwilling brood of wilful evils*, as *Damascene* calls
 them) have very discernible originals: they are partly to be imputed to us,
 F. IV. 20. and partly attributed to God: We by our faults deserve, and draw them to

Hof. 13. 9. our selves; God in justice and wisdom doth inflict them on us: *Perditio tua*
 Isa. 3. 9. *ex te*; O, *Israel*, *thou hast destroyed thy self*; and, *Wo unto their soul, for they*
have rewarded evil unto themselves; so doth God charge the cause of such

Amos 3. 6. evils upon us; and, *Shall there be any evil in the city, and the Lord hath not*
 Lam. 3. 38. *done it? Doth not evil and good proceed out of the most high? I am the Lord,*
 Isa. 45. 57. *and there is none else; I form the light, and create darkness; I make peace,*

Tertul. in and create evil; so God assumes the causality of them to himself. We need
 Marc. 2. therefore not to enquire after any other cause of these evils (*malæ voluntates*) so

called because they are displeasing to sense or fancy; although considering
 the needfulness, and usefulness of them in respect to publick benefit (as
 they are exemplary and monitive) and their wholesomeness for particular
 Heb. 12. 11. correction and cure (for, *No chastening*; as the *Apostle* saith, *for the present*
seemeth to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peace-
able fruit of righteousness unto them, which are exercised thereby) in such re-
 spects they may rather be called good things; however as they have any
 thing bad in them, they proceed from us, as they contain somewhat good,
 they are from God; which sufficiently confuteth those Heretical opiniators,
 and decideth the controversie; it being vain to suppose any other, beside
 these most apparent causes of such evils; Our bad desert, and God's just

Providence. * It is considerable, that even vice (although
 the worst thing in the world, and bad to the subject
 thereof) is yet in some respects useful; it in regard to the
 whole is not unprofitable; it serveth to the illustration of
 God's holy Attributes; it is a foil to virtue, and setteth
 off its lustre. But let thus much suffice, concerning the

* Γίνεται καὶ ἡ κακία πρὸς καὶ τὸν
 τῆς αἰσθητικῆς νόμον, καὶ ἐκ ἀχρηστίας πρὸς
 τὰ ὅλα. Chrys. apud Plut. de Stoic.
 contr. 31, 32. Sen. Qu. Nat. pref.
 & de Benef. 21. & Epist. 65.

objects of the Creation.

I shall next touch a consideration or two concerning the manner how,
 and the reason why God did make the world; which will commend to us
 his doing it, and intimate some grounds of duty, and both direct and ex-
 cite our practice in respect thereto: The manner of God's producing the
 world was altogether voluntary, and absolutely free; it did not issue from
 him ἀπεργαζέμενος, without counsel or choice, not (as some
 Philosophers have conceited) by natural or necessary eman-
 ation or result; as heat from fire, or light from the Sun,
 or shadow from a body; but from a wise free-choice: He
 so made the world, that he could wholly have abstained
 from making it, that he could have framed it otherwise,
 according to an infinite variety of ways. He could not be fatally determi-
 ned, there being no superiour cause to guide him, or to constrain him any wise
 (to do, or not to do; to do thus, or otherwise.) He could not be obliged
 to impart any perfection, being absolute master of all things
 possible, and debtour unto none upon any account: 'Tis
 his privilege therefore, and property to perform all things.

Fecit quod op-
 timum potuit
 ait. Plato in
 Tim.

Αἰτίον μὲν αὐτῷ ὁμολογεῖται τὸν
 θεόν, αἰτίον δὲ ἀπεργαζέμενος ὡς τῆς
 σκιάς τὸ σῶμα, καὶ τῆς λαμπρῆς οὐ-
 τὸ ἀπαυγάζον. Bas. hexaem. α.
 Οἰονεὶ ἀποσκίασμα τῆς δυνάμεως.
 Id.

Ἄλλοι βασιλέων εἰσιν, οἱ βασιλεῖς θεῶν,
 θεοὶ δ' ἀνάγκης. Philemon.

κατὰ βελιὸν τῆς βουλῆς αὐτοῦ, according to the counsel of his will, or according Eph. 1. 11. to his wise pleasure, as St. Paul expresseth it; and accordingly we hear the Elders in the Revelation acknowledging: *Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, Rev. 4. 11. and honour, and power; for thou hast created all things, καὶ διὰ τὸ βούλει σε, and for thy will they are and were created:* They do affirm God's pleasure to be the cause of his creating things, and they imply its being so to be the ground of our due veneration, gratitude, and all devotion; these being tributes due unto free goodness and bounty: If he made all things fatally, no praise or thanks were due to him; if he doeth things so, there is no reason to offer prayers to him, to seek his aid, or implore his favour; no devotion toward him hath a ground, or can subsist. 'Tis also evident, that if the world had been produced in way of necessary emanation, that it should have been eternal; as if the Sun had been eternal, his light had been eternal also; if fire had been, its heat likewise had been from eternity: but that the world was produced in time, not long since, within six or seven thousand years, not only faith and divine Chronology do assure us, but reason also shews, and all history conspires to persuade us; there being no plain monument, or probable memory of actions beyond that time: and by what progressions mankind was propagated over the world; how, and when, and where Nations were planted; Empires raised, Cities built, Arts invented or improved, it is not very hard to trace near the original times and places. The world therefore, in respect of time conceivable by us, is very young, and not many successions of ages, or lives of men, have passed between its beginning and ours; whence it plainly appears, that it was freely produced by God.

And how he produced it, the Scripture farther teacheth us; it was not with any laborious care or toil; not with the help of any engines or instruments subservient; not by inducing any preparatory dispositions or aptitudes, but ψιλῶ τῷ βέλει, by his mere willing (as Clemens Alex. speaks) his will and word were (as Tertull. expounds it) the hands, by which it is said that God made the heavens; at his call they did all immediately spring up out of nothing, at his command they presently ranged themselves into order: it was not a high strain of Rhetorick in Moses (as Longinus deemed) thus to describe the creation, but a most proper expression of that incomprehensible efficacy, which attends the divine will and decree. Adv. Her. mag. 45. Long. Scd. 7.

But since God did not only make the world freely, but wisely; and since all wise agents act to some purpose, and aim at some end, why (may it be inquired) did God make the world? what impulsive reason or inducement was there moving his will to do it? we may answer with

Plato; ἀγαθὸς ὡς, he was good; and he that is good, doth not envy any good to any thing: His natural benignity and munificence was the pure motive, incited or invited him to this great action of communicating existence, and futable perfection to his creatures, respectively: No benefit or emolument could hence accrue to him; he could receive no accession of beatitude; he did not need any profit or pleasure from without, being full within, rich in all perfection, completely happy in the contemplation and enjoyment of himself: Can a man, can any creature, be profitable to God? No; our good-

Quarvis quid propositum sit Deo? bonitas; ita certe Plato ait: Qua Deo faciendi mundum causa fuit? Bonus est; bono nulla minusquam boni invidia est. Sen. Ep. 65.

Ἐποίησεν ἀγγέλους, ἀρχαγγέλους, καὶ τὰς ἄλλας ψυχὰς σώματων νοσίων: ἐποίησεν δὲ δι' ἑτέρον μὴ ἑδὲν, δι' ἀγαθότητα ὃ μόνον, &c. Chryl. Tom. 6. Or. 9. ad Stagir.

ness doth not extend to him; we cannot any-wise advance or amplify him thereby; 'tis because goodness is freely diffusive and communicative of it self; because love is active and fruitful in beneficence; because highest excellency is void of all envy, selfishness and tenacy, that the world was produced such as it was; those perfections being intrinsecal to God's nature (for God is love; that is, essentially loving and good) disposed him to bestow so much of being, beauty, delight and comfort to his creatures. Hence, the earth (saith the Psalmist) is full of the goodness of the Lord; that is, every thing therein, according to its state and degree, is an effect of the divine goodness, partakes thereof both in its being, and in its enjoyments; and, The Lord (saith he again) is good to all, and his tender mercies (or his bowels of affection) are over all his works: he is good, and tenderly kind toward all his works, as well in producing.

Job 22. 2. Plal. 16. 2.

1 Joh. 4. 8.

Plal. 33. 5.

ac. 119. 64.

Plal. 145. 9.

מנוח

cing them, as preserving them; in freely rendring them capable of receiving good, as in carefully providing, and liberally dispensing good unto them: *That thou givest them* (saith the *Psalmist*, speaking with respect to the University of things) *they gather; thou openest thy hand, they are filled with good*; it is from God's open hand (that is, from his unconfined bounty and liberality) that all creatures do receive all that good which fills them; which satisfieth their needs, and satiateth their desires: A glimpse of which truth the ancient

Arist. Metaph. l. 4.
Πρώτιστον μὲν ἔργον θεῶν μνησάτο
πάντων. Parmenides.
Ἡ δ' ἔστι, ὃς πάντας μεταπέμπει
ἀθανάτουςιν. Heliod.

Pagans seem to have had, when they (as *Aristotle* observed) did commonly suppose love to have been the first and chief of the Gods; the original source and framer of things. But I will no longer insist on this Point in way of doctrine or disquisition; I shall only adjoin a little application.

1. The belief and consideration of this Point (that God is the Maker of Heaven and Earth) must necessarily beget in us highest esteem, admiration, and adoration of God, and his divine Excellencies, his Power, Wisdom and Goodness: For what a Power must that be (how unconceivably great both intensively and extensively must it be?) which could so expeditely and easily rear such a stupendiously vast frame? vast beyond the reach of our sense, of our imagination, of any rational collection that we can make? the earth, on which we dwell, divided into so many great Empires, full of so many inhabitants, bearing such variety of creatures different in kind, having in respect to the whole but the like proportion, as a little sand hath to the earth it self, or a drop of water to the great Ocean? What a Wisdom must that be, how unconceivably large and penetrant, that could contrive such an innumerable number of creatures (the artifice, which appears in one, in the least of which doth so far transcend our conceit) could digest them so fitly, could connect them so firmly in such an order? What a Goodness and Benignity must it be (how immense and boundless?) that did extend it self in affection and care, for so many creatures, abundantly providing for the need and comfort of them all? how transcendently glorious is the Majesty of him, that was author of all those beauties and strength, those splendours and magnificencies we do with so much pleasure and so much wonder behold? Well might the devout *Psalmist* and divine *Prophets* hence frequently take occasion of exciting us to praise, and celebrate the perfections of God: Well might even Heathen Philosophers from contemplation of the world be raised into fits of composing *Hymns* and *Elogies* of its great Maker.

2. This consideration likewise may confer to the breeding of hearty gratitude and humble affection toward God; for that we are upon many accounts very nearly and highly concerned in this great production. We our selves, whatever we are, and all we have, and all we enjoy; all our intrinsical endowments, and all our extrinsical accommodations are parts thereof, and did proceed from God; yea all the whole frame was designed by him with a parti-

Mundus, quasi communis Deorum atque hominum domus, aut urbs utrorumque. Cic. de N.D. II. de Fin. IV.

Mundus Deorum templum. Sen. de Ben. VII. 7. Epist. 90. Cic. in som. Sci. Philo. de Mun. 2. &c.

Ψυχῶν παιδευτήριον, καὶ διδασκαλεῖον, &c. Bas. M.

— ὁ πόντος ἀμοιβὴν ἔδωκεν, καὶ δὲ κατορθωμάτων ἀντίδοσιν, &c. Chryl. ἀνδρ. ζ. vid.

Cogitavit nos ante natura quàm genuit, &c. Sen. de Benef. 2. 23.

Nimium nos suspicimus, si digni nobis videmur, propter quos tanta moveantur. Sen. de Ira, 27.

Psal. 8.

fies the same, when upon contemplation of the World, he saith: *When I con-*

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fiar the heavens, the works of thy fingers, the Moon and the Stars, which thou hast ordained, what is man that thou art mindful of him? That the author of so great and glorious a work should vouchsafe to regard so mean things as us, to visit us continually with a provident inspection and care over our welfare, to lay so vast projects, and accomplish so mighty works in regard to us; what a demonstration of admirable condescension, what a ground of wonder and astonishment, what an argument of love and thankfulness toward God is this?

3. Yea what a ground and motive to humility should this consideration be unto us? What is man? what, I say, is man in comparison to him that made the world? what is our strength, what our wit, what our goodness, what any quality or ability of ours, in respect to the perfection of those things in him? how weak, silly, narrow, poor and wretched things must we needs appear to our selves, when seriously we consider the immense excellencies displayed in the World's creation; how should this depress and debase us in our conceits about our selves? Especially if we reflect upon our own unprofitableness, our ingratitude, and our injustice toward our Creatour; how none, or how scant returns we have made to him, who gave unto us, and to all things for us, our being and theirs, our all and theirs; how faint in our acknowledgments, how negligent in our services we have been; yea how preposterously, instead of our due homage and tribute, we have repay'd him affronts and injuries; frequently opposing his will, and abusing his goodness!

4. This consideration is further a proper inducement unto trust and hope in God; and withal a fit ground of consolation to us in all our needs and distresses. He that was able to do so great things, and hath been willing to do so much for us, he that having made all things, can dispose of all, and *doeth* (as King *Dan. 4. 35.* *Nebuchadnezzar* taught by experience confessed) *according to his will in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, so that none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?* How can we distrust his protection or succour in our exigencies? This consideration good men have been wont to apply to such purposes: *My help* (saith the *Psalmist*) *cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth.* Well might he be assured, having so potent and faithful an aid: and, *Happy* (saith he again) *is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help; whose hope is in the Lord his God, which made heaven and earth; the sea, and all that therein is.* Happy indeed he surely is; no disappointment or disaster can befall him, who doth with reason confide in him that made the world, and can manage it to his advantage. The Prophet *Jeremy* begins his Prayer thus: *O Lord God, behold thou hast made heaven and earth by thy great power and stretched-out arm; and there is nothing too hard for thee.* The creation of the World is such an experiment of God's power and goodness, as may support our faith in all encounters; so that we should not think any thing so difficult, but that God is able, nor so high, but that God is willing to perform it for us, if it make toward our real good.

5. Finally, This consideration ministreth a general incitement unto all obedience; which from God's production of all things doth appear, upon several accounts, due and reasonable; all other things do constantly obey the law imposed on them, insist in the course defined to them; and shall we only be disobedient and refractory, irregular and exorbitant? Shall all the hosts of heaven most readily and punctually obey God's summons? Shall *the pillars of heaven tremble, and be astonished at his reproof?* Shall *the sea, with its proud waves,* be curb'd and confined by his decree? Shall *fire and hail, snow and vapour, and stormy winds* (such rude and boisterous things) *fulfil his word?* as they are all said to do; and shall we be unruly and rebellious? we, who are placed in the top of nature, for whom all nature was made, to whom all nature serves; shall we only, of all things in nature, transgress against the Authour and Governour of nature?

But I leave the farther improvement of this grand Point to your meditation, concluding with the exhortation of that Angel in the *Apocalypse*: *Fear God, and give glory to him; worship him that made heaven and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of water: Even to him be all obedience, and adoration, and praise for ever and ever. Amen.*

And in Jesus Christ, &c.

SERMON XIII.

OF THE

Truth and Divinity

OF THE

Christian Religion.

E P H E S. I. 13.

In whom ye also (trusted) having heard the word of truth, the Gospel of your salvation.

THAT our Religion in gross is true and agreeable to reason, is a ground upon which the truth of its single doctrines and articles of faith doth lean; it is therefore requisite that it first be well supported, or that we be thoroughly assured thereof. Being therefore engaged at other times to discourse upon the particular points of Christian doctrine, which suppose this general one; I shall take occasion collaterally in these exercises to insist upon this subject; supposing in those, what in these we shall endeavour to prove; so both avoiding there such grand digressions, or the treating upon matters not directly incident; and supplying here what seems necessary or useful there to the confirmation of *our faith*.

Now in the words (I did now read) St. Paul styles the Christian doctrine (and in many other places of Scripture it is also so called) *the word of truth* (that is a most true doctrine) and *the gospel of our salvation* (that is a message brought from heaven by our Saviour and his Apostles, in which the ways and means of attaining salvation (that is, of that best happiness which we are capable of) the overtures thereof from God, and the conditions in order there- to required from us are declared.) And that we have reason to entertain it as such, I shall immediately address my self to shew.

Μὴ ἐξέταζε,
ἀλλὰ πίστευ-
σον. Orig. 1.
pag. 8, 9.

Orig. 6. p. 282.
Πίστευσον ἐν
σωθῆναι ὑμᾶς
λαίς, ἢ ἀπιθῆναι.

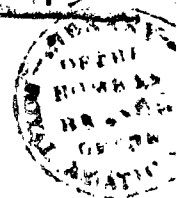
It was anciently objected by *Celsus*, and other Adversaries of our Religion, that Christianity did exact from men *ψιλλὴ καὶ ἀλογον πίστιν*, a bare groundless faith; did impose *νόμους ἀναποδείκτους*, laws incapable of proof; (that is, as to the goodness and reasonableness of them) did inculcate this rule, *μη ἐξέταζε, ἀλλὰ*

μὴν πιστεῖν, do not examine or discuss, but only believe; that it debarr'd inquiries and debates about truth, slighted the use and improvement of reason, rejected humane learning and wisdom, injoining men to swallow its dictates, without chewing; or any previous examination concerning the reason and truth of them.

The ground of this accusation was surely a great mistake, arising from their not distinguishing that belief, whereby we embrace Christianity it self in gross, from that belief, whereby in consequence to the former we assent to the particular doctrines thereof: especially to such as concern matters supernatural, or exceeding the reach of our natural understanding to penetrate or comprehend. For as to the first kind, that belief whereby we embrace Christianity it self, as true in the gross; I say, it is no-wise required upon such terms. Our Religion doth not obtrude it self upon men in the dark, it doth not bid men to put out their eyes, or to shut them close; no, nor even to wink, and then to receive it: it rather obliges them to open their eyes wide, to go into the clearest light; with their best senses to view it thoroughly, before they embrace it: It requires not, yea it refuses (ordinarily) a sudden and precipitate assent; admitting no man (capable of judging and chusing for himself) to the participation thereof, or acknowledging him to be a believer indeed, till (after a competent time and means of instruction) he declares himself to understand it well, and heartily to approve it. Never any Religion was so little liable to that censure; none ever so freely exposed it self to a fair trial at the bar of reason; none ever so earnestly invited men to consider, and weigh its pretences; yea provoked them, for its sake and their own (at the peril of their souls, and as they tendred their own best good and safety) to an *ἐννόμων ἐξέτασις*, an equal and discreet examination thereof. Other Religions have for their justification insisted upon the examples of Ancestours, the prescriptions and customs of times, their large extent and prevalence among multitudes of people, their establishment by civil laws, and countenance of secular powers (arguments wholly extrinsecal and of small validity) declining all other test or trial of reason: Yea, 'tis remarkable how *Celsus* (and others who made the foresaid objection) did contradict and confute themselves, affirming men ought without scruple to conform in opinion and practice to the Religion prescribed by the Laws of their Country, be they what they will, never so absurd or dishonest.

Δεῖ φυλάσσειν τὰ εἰς κοινὸν κεκρυμμένα (things established by common authority must be observed.) And, *τὰ παρ' ἐκείνοις ὁρθῶς ἀν' περὶ τοῖς ταύτῃ δρώμενα, ὅπῃ κείνοις φίλον*. (things are every where rightly done, being done according to the fashion of each place) such were the rules and maxims those men urged; and this was indeed exacting irrational belief, a stifling mens reason, and muzzling their judgments: this was a method enforcing men blindly to yield consent to errors and inconsistencies innumerable.

But the teachers, and maintainers of Christianity proceeded otherwise; confiding in the pure merit of their cause, they warned men to lay aside all prejudices; to use their best understandings; in a case of such moment, to apply themselves to an industrious and impartial search of the truth. Let one for the rest speak their sense: *Oportet in ea re maxime, in qua vita ratio versatur, sibi quemque confidere, suoque iudicio ac propriis sensibus niti ad investigandam & perpendendam veritatem, quam credentem alienis erroribus decipi tanquam ipsum rationis expertem: dedit omnibus Deus pro virili portione sapientiam, ut & inaudita investigare possent, & audita perpendere*: We ought especially, says he, every one of us in that matter, which chiefly concerns our manner of life, to confide in our selves; and rather with our own judgment, and our proper senses, strive to find out and judge of the truth, than believing other mens errors, to be deceived, like things void of reason: God hath given all men a competent share of wisdom, that they might both search out things not told them, and weigh what they hear. So especially just and candid was Christianity in its first offering it self to the minds of men; it propounds indeed and presses,



Vid. Orig. in Cels. lib. 3. pag. 142. Ο ταῦτα πιστεύσας ἐκ ἀπλῆς, ἰδὲ ἐκ λόγων, ἀλλὰ κελσεὶ καὶ πληροφειᾷ, χάρμα εἶληκεν ἐκ θεοῦ, &c. Const. A. post. 8. 1.

Ha sunt religiones, &c. Lactant. 2. 6. (p. 171.)

Orig. V. pag. 248, &c.

Qua omnia sapiens servabit tanquam legibus iussa, non tanquam Divi grata. Sen. apud Aug. de Civ. D. 6. 10.

Omnem istam ignobilem Deorum turbam, quam longo aeo longa superstitio congeffit, sic (inquit) adorabimus, ut meminimus cultum ejus magis ad morem, quam ad rem pertinere. Id. 16.

—Colebat quidam reprehendebat, agebat quod arguebat, quod culpabat adorabat. Aug. ib. de Seneca.

Lact. 2. 7.

ἡ ἐξ ὧν
ρετικῇ μετ'
ἀληθεῖ λόγῳ.
ἐκαστοῦ συγ-
κατάδοσις.
Clem. Alex.

as evident in it self, the worth and consequence of the matter ; but refers the decision on either part (so far as concerns every particular man) to the verdict of that reason and conscience, with which to such purposes God hath indued every man. And that it can proceed no otherwise, appears farther from the nature of that faith it requires: It commends faith as a great vertue, and therefore supposes it both voluntary and reasonable; it promises a ample rewards thereto, and so implies it a work not of necessity or chance, but of care and industry; it declares infidelity to be very blameable, and threatens severe punishment thereto; why? because it signifies irrational negligence or perverseness.

1 Theff. 5. 21.
1 John 4. 1.
Matt. 24. 4.
Eph. 5. 6.
1 Pet. 3. 15.

In fine, Christianity doth not inveigle any man by slight, nor compel him by force, (being indeed commonly destitute of those advantages; nor being able to use them, if it would) but fairly by reason persuades him to embrace it; it doth not therefore shun examination, nor disclaim the judgment of reason; but earnestly seeks and procures the one, chearfully and confidently appeals to the other. *Examine all things; hold fast that which is good. Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits, whether they be of God. See that no man deceive you. Be always ready, with meekness and respect, to give to every one that demands it of you, an account of the hope in you.* These are Maxims which Christianity goes upon in the propagation and maintenance of its self.

Indeed after it hath convinced men of its truth in general, having evidenced the truth of its fundamental principles, it then requires a full and cordial assent, without exception, to its particular doctrines grounded upon, or deduced from them. When, I say, it hath, to the satisfaction of a man's mind, with solid reason made good its principles; it then enjoins men to surcease farther scruple or debate concerning what it teaches or draws from them; which is a proceeding most reasonable, and conformable to the Method used in the strictest Sciences: For the principles of any Science being either demonstrated out of some higher Science, or evidenced by fit experiments to common sense; and being thence granted and received, 'tis afterward unlawful and absurd to challenge the conclusions collected from them: So if it have been proved and acknowledged that our Principles are true (for instance, that God is perfectly veracious, and that Christian Religion hath his authority or attestation to it) 'twill then be a part of absurd levity and inconsistency to question any particular proposition evidently contained therein; and in this sense, or in these cases, it is true indeed that Christianity doth engage us to believe simply and purely, doth silence natural reason, and condemn curious enquiry, and prohibit dispute, especially to persons of meaner capacities or improvements. And thus, I take it, those Christians of old were to be understood, who so much commended immediate faith, excluded reason from being too busy in matters of Religion, discountenanced that curiosity, which searched into and would needs find those inscrutable mysteries, which our Religion teaches. Our Religion then will allow (yea it invites and exhorts) an Infidel to consider and judge of its truth, although it will not allow a Christian to be so vain and inconsistent, as to doubt of any particular doctrine therein; seeing by so questioning a part, he in effect renounces the whole, and subverts the foundation of his faith; at least ceases thereby to be a steady Christian. I might then well invert our Adversaries discourse, and offer it as a good argument of our Religion's truth, that it alone among all Religions, with a candour and confidence peculiar to truth, calls us to the light, is willing, yea desirous to undergo trial; I add, yea challenges as its due from all men, and demands it of them as a necessary duty to hear it, to consider it seriously, to pass sentence upon it: for as commonly error and groundless conceit, being conscious of their own weakness, are timorous and suspicious, and thence ready to decline all proof and conflict of reason; so truth, knowing its own strength, is daring and resolute, enters boldly into the lists, being well assured (or hopeful) of good success in the combat.

Baf. in Pf. 15.

Joh. 3. 21, 22.

Which proceeding, proper to Christianity, is in it self very plausible, and may well beget a favourable prejudice on its side; and that it is not confident without

without reason, will appear upon our examining the principles and grounds on which it stands. The *first* Principle of Christianity (common thereto and all other Religions) is that there is one God (sovereign and transcendent in all perfections, the maker and governour of all things.) The *next* (which also no Religion doth not acknowledge) is, that God is perfectly veracious, so that whatever appears to be asserted, or attested to, by him, is certainly true: which principles (by reasons I hope proper and sufficient) I partly have proved, and partly shall hereafter upon occasion shew. A *third* is, that God is the author of the Christian doctrine and law; that he hath revealed this doctrine to mankind, and confirmed it by his testimony; that he hath imposed this law upon us, and established it by his authority. This Principle (being the foundation and sum of our faith) involves matter of fact; and consequently being not evident immediately in it self, doth (for a full conviction of a man's mind, and producing therein a solid persuasion) require a rational probation; and that it may appear we believe it like reasonable men, not (as Pagans and Mahometans, and those of other Sects do) upon wilful resolution, or by mere chance, as also for settling the ground of particular Articles comprehended under this, I shall endeavour to shew the reasonableness thereof; advancing my discourse by several steps and degrees. I observe *first* that

Μαδωμεν τὸν ὁπότε ἐλλύσας
διαλέγεσθαι, ἵνα μὴ ὦμεν ὡς δρέμ-
ματα ἢ βοσκήματα, ἀλλ' ὦμεν παρ-
σκευασμένοι πρὸς τὸ ἐν ἡμῖν ἐλπίδ' ὅτι.
Chryl. in 1 Cor. 1. 17.

I. It is reasonable to suppose that God should at some time or season fully and clearly reveal unto men the truth concerning himself, and concerning them, as he and they stand related to each other; concerning his nature and will, concerning our state and duty, respectively. The nature and attributes of God, the nature and qualities of man, being compared, do persuade thus much.

It is apparent to common experience, that mankind being left to it self (especially in matters of this kind) is very insufficient to direct it self: that it is apt to lie under woful ignorance, to wander in uncertainty, to fall into error, to possess it self with vain conceit, to be abused with any sort of delusion, which either the malice of wicked spirits, or the subtilty of naughty men, or the wildness of its own fond passions and desires can put upon it, or bring it under; 'tis consequently exposed to all those vices, dishonourable, hurtful and destructive to its nature; and to all those miseries, which from ignorance and error, from vice and wickedness do naturally spring; especially to an estrangement from God, and an incapacity of his love and favour. The two only remedies of all these mischiefs (natural light and primitive tradition) how little they did avail to cure them; how the one was too faint in it self and easily lost in mists of prejudice, from ill education and bad custom prevailing generally; how the other (besides its other defects) soon was polluted, and indeed quite spoiled by adulterate mixtures of fond, impure and vile superstitions; woful experience doth more than enough evince. We see, that not only the generality of mankind did sometime lie in this sad condition, but that even the most elevated and refined wits (those among men, who by all possible improvement of their reason did endeavour to raise themselves from this low estate; to rescue their minds from the common ignorance, the mistakes, the superstitions and follies of the world) could by no means in any good measure attain those ends: for what did their earnest enquiries, or their restless studies produce, but dissatisfaction and perplexity of mind? wherein did their eager disputations conclude, but in irreconcilable differences of opinion, and greater uncertainties than were when they began? Most were plung'd into a desperate Scepticism (a doubt and diffidence of all things) none arrived higher than some faint conjectures, or some unsteady opinions concerning those matters of highest consequence; such notions as were not effectual enough to produce in them a practice (in any good measure) suitable to the dignity of man's nature, to the duty he owes to God, to the capacities man hath of doing and receiving good; from which due glory to God, or much benefit to man did accrue. Ἐργαζώμεσθαι ἐν τοῖς διαλογισμοῖς, they were made Rom. 1. 21.
vain (or, they were frustrated, deluded, befooled) in their reasonings and dis- Eph. 4. 17.

putes; the result of their busy speculations was, that *their foolish heart was darkened*; so darkened, that with all the light they had, they could not see any thing; at least not clearly discern what chiefly it concerned them to know.

1 Cor. I. 21. *The world by wisdom* (by all the wisdom it could get) *did not know God*; did not acquire a requisite measure of knowledge in divine things; did not however know him so, as to glorify him, as to thank him for the benefits received from him, as to bring forth worthy fruits of piety and vertue. So much St. Paul observed of them; and not he alone did observe it, but even themselves were sensible of this their unhappiness; whence so many complaints concerning the blindness and infirmity of man's mind, concerning the obscurity and uncertainty of things, concerning the insuperable difficulty of finding truth, concerning the miserable consequences from these, do occur among them.

—*Hinc causa
mali mortali-
bus agnis Na-
turam nescire
Dei.*

Now this being the natural state of men, destitute of divine conduct and assistance; do they not (I pray) greatly need another light to guide them in this darkness, or to bring them out of it; a helpful hand to free them from these inconveniences? and is it not reasonable to suppose, that God who is alone able, will also be willing in due time to afford it? He, who in nature is most benign and bountiful, most pitiful and gracious; whose goodness fills the earth, and whose mercy is over all his works; he, who bears to man the special relation of a Father, and bears to him a futable tenderness of affection and good will; he, all whose attributes seem concerned in engaging him upon this performance; not only his Goodness to *instigate* him, and his Wisdom to *direct* him, but even his Justice in some manner to *oblige* him thereto.

Psal. 33. 5.
104. 24.

1. His Goodness: *Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb?* Yea, though 'tis unnatural and unusual, 'tis yet possible she may, because nature in her is not unalterably constant, and the same; but the immutable God cannot so cease to be mindful of, to be compassionate toward his children. That gracious ear cannot hear mankind groan so dolefully under bitter oppressions; that pitiful eye cannot behold his own dear off-spring, the flower of his creation, lying in so comfortless, so remediless distress, without feeling some pity, without being moved to reach some relief; such notes surely cannot be grateful, such spectacles cannot be pleasant to him, nor can he then forbear long to provide means of removing them from his presence. We esteem it want of goodness (yea an effect of very bad disposition) not to direct a bewildred traveller, not to relieve, if we can, even a stranger fallen into great distress: and if we being in such degree bad, are inclinable to perform such good offices, how much more ready may we suppose him, who is goodness it self, (goodness infinite and absolute) to do the like for all mankind, so much needing his guidance and help? He who hath settled our outward estate in so advantageous a posture, who hath made provisions so various and ample for the needs and conveniences (yea for the pleasure) of our bodies, would he have so little care over our better part, and leave our souls so slenderly furnished, letting them pine as it were for want of spiritual sustenance? how can we think his good providence defective in so main, so principal a part thereof? Thus doth divine goodness (to my apprehension) very strongly confirm our supposition.

Vid. Ezek. 16.

2. And his Wisdom enforces the same. God made the world to express his goodness, and to display his glory; and his goodness who can be sensible of? his glory who can perceive, who can promote, but man? but he who is endued with reason, enabling him to reflect upon the good he feels, to admire the excellency he discovers, to render grateful acknowledgments for the one, to utter acclamations of praise to the other? which purposes yet will be utterly (or at least in great measure) frustrated, should God for ever suffer men to continue in such ignorance, doubt, or mistake concerning himself; if men are not fully perswaded that he made the world and governs it, how can they pay those due homages of dread to his glorious power, of admiration to his excellent wisdom, of love to his transcendent goodness? This grand theatre would (as it were) stand useless, and all the wonders acted thereupon would appear in vain, should there be wanting a spectator; should man be altogether blind

heedless; yea man's faculty it self, that his seeing faculty of mind would perceive nothing, were there not a light rendring things visible to him. Common sense hath dictated to men, that man is capable of shewing respect, of performing duty and service to God, that also God requires and expects them from him; the same declares, that God best knows what kinds of service, what expressions of respect best please him. Reason tells, that God would have man act in the best manner, according to the design of his nature; that he would have the affairs of men proceed in some good order, that he even desires earnestly the good of men, and delights in their happiness: and if so, 'tis reasonable to suppose, that being most wise he should dispose fit means for accomplishing those ends; for securing himself, as it were, from disappointment; that therefore he should impart to men a competent knowledge of himself, should declare his good will and pleasure to them, should reveal both the best way of their serving him, and the best means of their attaining happiness to themselves. So divine wisdom grounds an argument for our supposition.

3. God's Justice also seems not a little to favour it; every good Governour thinks it just to take care that his subjects should understand his pleasure, and be acquainted with his laws; he causes them therefore to be solemnly promulgated, that all may take notice; if any of them by long disuse are become unknown, he revives the knowledge of them by new proclamations; to quicken obedience he propounds fit rewards, and deters from disobedience by menacing futable punishments, knowing man's nature resty and unapt to move without these spurs: And is it likely the sovereign Governour and Judge of all the world should observe less equity in his administrations? that he should neglect any means necessary or apt to promote his subjects performance of their duty, to prevent the breaches of his laws? He that loves righteousness above all, he that so earnestly desires to be duly obeyed, he that infinitely delights in his subjects good; can he fail sufficiently to declare his will, to encourage men to comply with it, to terrifie them from transgressing it? will he suffer his laws to remain unknown, or uncertain; will he not consider the infirmities of his subjects, will he leave any fair apology for disobedience? No, the superlative justice of God seems to perswade the contrary.

4. I might add, that generally it seems unbecoming the Majesty divine, that he should endure the world, his kingdom, to continue under a perpetual usurpation and tyranny; to suffer, that his imperial throne should be possessed, his authority abused, his name insulted over by enemies and rebels against him; (by evil spirits, whether those of hell, or those on earth) that a cruel fiend, that a cursed ghost, that a brute beast, that a chimera of man's fancy should be worshipped, while himself is forgotten and neglected, is dishonoured and despised; that iniquity and wickedness (with all the filthy brood of ignorance and error) should every where flourish and domineer, while righteousness and vertue lie prostrate and are trampled upon: This surely the King of glory, the great patron of goodness will not permit to be; sooner rather may we conceive that, to remove these indecencies and these mischiefs, he would presently turn the world into a desert and solitude, or pour a deluge of water over the face of the earth, or with flames of vengeance consume it into ashes.

We cannot indeed judge or determine concerning the special circumstances or limits of God's dealing toward man in this particular; concerning the time when, the manner how, the measure according to which God will dispense those revelations of himself; those depend upon mysteries of counsel and wisdom surpassing our comprehension: That God should for a while connive at mens ignorance, and suffer them to grope after divine truth; to try them, as he did the *Israelites* in the wilderness, how they would behave themselves in that state; to prove how they would use their talent of natural light, to make them sensible of their own infirmity, to shew them whence all their welfare must proceed, on whom all their happiness depends, to make them more able to value, more desirous to embrace the redress vouchsafed them;

Acts 10. 38.
Eph. 2. 2.

Acts 17. 27, 30.
14. 16.
Deut. 8. 15, 16.
Exod. 16. 8.

*Vid. Gen 15.
16, &c.*

- them; as also, to demonstrate his own great clemency, long-suffering and patience; that I say for such purposes, and others unsearchable by our low understanding, God should for some time forbear, with a full evidence to declare all his mind to men, is not so strange or unlikely; but that for ever, through all courses of time, he should leave men in so forlorn a condition, in such a depth of ignorance, such perplexity of doubt, such captivity under sin, such subjection to misery, seems not probable, much less can it seem improbable that he hath done it: It cannot, I say, in any reason seem misbecoming the goodness, wisdom or justice of God clearly to discover to us, what he requires us to do, what good he intends for us, what way leads to our happiness, how we may avoid misery. This consideration if it do not prove peremptorily, that God cannot but sometime make such a revelation, nor that he yet hath actually done it (forasmuch as we cannot reach the utmost possibilities of things, nor are fit judges of what God must necessarily do; although to my apprehension this sort of reasoning, with due caution used, subsisting in general terms, and not over precisely applying it to particular cases (implicated by circumstances and specialties not falling under our judgment) hath great force;) yet it removes all obstruction to our belief, and disposes us with more readiness to admit the reasons which follow: For it being not improbable, yea according to the reason of the thing very probable that he should do it, we have cause with attention and expectation of success on this hand to regard the arguments that pretend to prove he hath done it.

This is the first step of our discourse, at which we shall stop for the present.

And

And in Jesus Christ, &c.

SERMON XIV.

OF THE Impiety and Imposture OF PAGANISM AND MAHOMETANISM.

EPHES. I. 13.

In whom ye also (trusted) having heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation.

THAT the Christian doctrine is what St. Paul here calls it, *a word of truth*, and did proceed from the God of truth, is the Proposition we are endeavouring to verify and persuade. To that purpose we did first discourse, that it is very probable God should sometime clearly and fully reveal his mind to men, concerning matters relating to his own glory and service, their good and happiness.

II. I now proceed another step, and assert, that no other Revelation of that kind and importance hath been made; that no other Religion, which hath been or is now in being, can with good probability pretend to have thus proceeded from God; so as by him to have been designed for a general, a perpetual, a complete instruction, and obligation of mankind. There have appeared but *three* pretences thereto, that of ancient *Paganism*, that of *Mahometanism*, and that of *Judaism* (for the more particular pretensions of enthusiastical Impostours have been subordinate either to Christianity it self, or to one of those; and besides having found no considerable progress or continuance in the world, nor countenance (as it were) from providence, are not pertinent to this consideration, besides that they are all generally disclaimed) but that none of those three pretences are well grounded, I shall, examining each briefly, shew: (briefly, I say, for I need not insist on them largely, the matter having past so many good pens, especially that excellent one

one of *Grotius*; however it falling in my way and method, I shall offer what hath concerning it occur'd to my thoughts.)

For the first, ancient *Paganism*; it did indeed (in the parcels thereof or by retail) pretend to a kind of divine Revelation; that it derived its notions and its forms of practice from the direction of invisible powers, given to single persons or places, in several ways, (by immediate apparition, by prophetic inspiration, by significant events or prodigies) but it did not, nor could not pretend to any one uniform revelation from the sovereign God solemnly delivered and directed to all mankind; which is an argument not only that those pretended revelations were imperfect and insufficient to the ends propounded, but also false and counterfeit: For we may well suspect those edicts, which are clancularly set up in corners, and which run not in the King's name, nor are marked with his royal signature, to have proceeded from impostours, or from rebels; especially if the matter of them doth not advance, but depress his authority; doth not promote but prejudice his interest; doth not comport with, but contravene his pleasure, otherwise declared. And such was the manner, such the matter of those *Pagan* revelations. Put the whole body of that Religion (if I may so call it) together, and you have nothing but a lump of confusion and inconsistency, of deformity and filthiness, of vanity and folly, little as may be therein tending to the reverence of God, or to the good of man; to the promoting of vertue and goodness in humane conversation, to the breeding love and goodwill in men toward one another, to the maintaining justice, peace and good order in societies; much apt to produce the contrary effects. It was not (I say) ever one simple or uniform, one fixed or constant thing, but according to difference of place and time various, and mutable; diversly shaped and model'd according to the fancy and humour, design or interest of the state that allowed, the priests that managed it, and the people that received it; a plain sign (that excepting some general scattered notions deduced from ancient Tradition) it did wholly proceed from humane device, or from a worse cause (the suggestion of evil spirits, abusing the fondness and pravity of men.) Survey it, and what shall you find therein, but a bundle of idle, ill contrived, incredible and inconsistent stories; (arguing nothing of truth or sincerity, little of wit or discretion in those who invented them) those attended by practices foolish, lewd and cruel; unworthy of humane nature, contrary to common sense and honesty? Their worship (that of the supreme Lord being neglected, &c.) you will see directed towards objects most improper and unbecoming: to the ghosts of dead men; men in their lives (if we may trust the reports of their devoutest adorers) famous for nothing so much as for vicious enormities, for thefts and rapine, for murders and parricides, for horrid lusts, adulteries, rapes and incests; and such persons, alive or dead, what good or wise man would not rather loath and despise, than worship or respect? to somewhat, though not otherwise yet, in degree of nature worse than those, even to brute beasts; to the most vile, the most mischievous of them; (dogs, serpents, crocodiles) to pay veneration unto which how unspeakably abject a mind doth it argue? yea they stooped lower, even to creatures inanimate, to the stars and elements, to rivers and trees, and other such things, which we see acting by natural necessity, not yielding any signification of understanding, of sense, of life in them; which therefore, so far inferiour to us in nature, how sottish a baseness was it to adore? nay, they descended to a lower degree, if it may be, of folly, dedicating temples, and offering sacrifices to things even void of subsistence; to mere qualities and accidents of things, to the passions of our minds, to the diseases of our bodies, to the accidents of our lives: Who would think any man could be so mad as to reckon impudence, that odious vice; a fever, that troublesome disease; or fortune (that unaccountable name of nothing; which wise men so little trust, and fools so much complain of) among things divine and venerable? Can I mention any thing worse than all these, which the degenerate ignorance, and naughtiness of man hath crouched to? yes, (with a folly of all most wretched and deplorable) they fawned upon, they

*Inde furor
vulgo, quod
numina vi-
cinorum
Odit uterque
locus, dum
solos credit
Habendos
Esse Deos, quos
ipse colit—
Juv. Sat. 15.*

obeyed, they offered their dearest pledges of life and fortune to the sworn enemies as of God and goodness, so of their own good and welfare, to the very cursed fiends of hell: whom, if they had not been extremely blind and senseless, by the qualities of those rites and mysteries they suggested (so bloody and cruel, so low and foul) they might easily have detected to be so. Such objects as these, as their devotion spent upon, to these they paid their respect, in these they reposed their confidence; And was such a Religion likely to proceed from God, was it like to produce any glory to him, or any benefit to man? from such thorns what fruits can we hope should sprout of good life, of sound morality? what piety toward God, what justice, truth or goodness toward man; what sobriety or purity in themselves can we expect should arise from such conceits, and such practices? surely, no other than those, which St. Paul describes in the first Chapter of his *Epistle to the Romans*, and in the second of the *Epistle to the Ephesians*, and St. Peter 1. 4. 3. which history plainly shews to have been no slanderous imputations upon *Gentilism*. If any good did appear in the conversation of some men, who followed that Religion, it is not to be imputed to the influence of that, but to some better cause; to the reliques of good nature, to the glimmerings of natural light, breaking forth in some, and by their precept or example conveyed to others; to the necessary experience concerning the mischiefs of vice, and advantages of virtue; or (perhaps also) to secret whispers and impressions of divine grace upon some mens minds, vouchsafed in pity to them and others whom they might teach or lead into ways somewhat better, than those common ones of extreme wickedness and folly; to these, I say, or such causes all instances of practice in any measure innocent or commendable may rather be ascribed, than to that Religion, which was much apter to corrupt and debauch, than to better or civilize men; for with what intention soever they were spoken, there was not much of real calumny in those words of *Lucretius*

— *sapientis olim*
Religio peperit scelerata, atque improba facta.

But it is needless to discourse much against that which hath no reasonable patron, and which scarce any wise man, when it was in fashion, did seriously think to have had any truth or reality in it. *Plato*, you know, often inveighs against the inventers of those beastly Fables in heathen Theology (upon which yet all the œconomy of their religious practice did depend;) *Aristotle* Arist. Metaph. 12. 8. attributes the constitution of those Religions to the subtilty of Statesmen; there is none of the Fathers, I think, or any other disputer against Heathenism who hath more directly or earnestly oppugned it than *Pliny* hath: There was Lib. 2. cap. 7. few or none of the Philosophers, who did not signify his dislike or contempt Vid. Plut. de superst. p. 291. De Leg. X. &c. of the vulgar opinions and practices concerning Religion; what *Cicero* saith of one part, the wiser sort did judge of all: *Tota res est inventa fallaciis aut ad quæstum, aut ad superstitionem, aut ad errorem* (the whole business was deceitfully forged either for gain, or out of superstition, or from mistake.) De div. p. 240. Tusc. 9. 1. Ep. 301. They did indeed, most or all of them, in their external behaviour comply with common practice, out of a politick discretion, for their safety and quiet sake; but in their inward thoughts and judgments they (as by many passages in their Writings doth appear) believed nothing, nor liked any thing in it: they observed those things (as *Seneca* said) *tanquam legibus jussa, non tanquam diis grata* (not as acceptable to the gods themselves, but as commanded by the laws of their country.) And indeed this dissimulation was so notorious, that even the vulgar discerned it; and therefore seldom the wiser men were reputed among them the most religious, but liable to accusation for impiety; and some of them ye know suffered extremities upon that score, who could not altogether conceal that contempt, which the vanity of popular superstitions had begotten toward them in their hearts:

Hæc Es dicuntur Es creduntur stultissime, Es plena sunt futilitatis, summaque levitatis. Balbus in Cic. de N. D. 2.

Vid. August. de Civit. D. lib. 4. 33. lib 6. 10.

I might add that all those *Pagan* Religions did vanish together with the countenance of secular authority and power, sustaining them; which shews plainly enough, that they had little or no root in the hearty belief or approbation of those who professed them.

And thus much may suffice, I suppose, to declare, that *Paganism* did not proceed from divine Revelation; but from humane invention or suggestion Diabolical.

I shall only adjoin, that the considering this case of *Heathens* may be of good use, (and to that use indeed St. *Paul* hath largely applied it) in confirming what we before urged, The great need of some full and plain Revelation to the world of God's mind, in order to God's glory and man's good; as also it is of singular use (which also the same *Apostle* frequently did put it to) by the contemplation thereof to discover our great obligations to bless and thank God for his great mercy in revealing his heavenly truth to us, from whence we are freed from errors and mischiefs so deplorable; which otherwise from humane infirmity, and the Devil's malice, we should easily (and in a manner necessarily) have incurred.

That Pretence was ancients in standing; but there hath even since Christianity started up another, (*Mahometanism*) which if not upon other accounts, yet in respect to its age, and to the port it bears in the world, demands some consideration; for it hath continued a long time, and hath vastly over-spread the earth: neither is it more formidable in its looks, than peremptory in its words; vaunting it self to be no less than a complete, a general, an ultimate declaration of God's pleasure, cancelling and voiding all others that have gone before. But examining both the substance and circumstances thereof, considering the quality of the instruments by whom, of the times when it was introduced; of the places where, of the people who first, or afterward did receive it; the manner of its rise, progress and continuance; as also the matter it teaches or enjoins; we shall not find stamped on it the genuine characters of a divine original and authority; but have great reason to deem it a brood of most lewd and impudent cozenage. In times of great disturbance and confusion, when barbarous nations, like torrents, did overflow the world, and turned all things upside down; in times of general corruption and disorder in mens minds and manners, when even among Christians ignorance and superstition, dissension and uncharitableness, impiety and iniquity, did greatly prevail; in a very blind and obscure corner of the earth, among a crew of wild thieves and runnagates (such have those *Arabians* been always famed and known to be) this *Seet* had its birth and fosterage; among those fierce and savage over-runners of the world it got its growth and stature; into this sort of people (being indeed in its constitution well accommodated to their humour and *genius*) it was partly insinuated by juggling tricks, partly driven by seditious violence; the first Author hereof being a person, according to the description given of him in their own Legends, of no honest or honourable qualities, but having all the marks of an Impostour; rebellious and perfidious, inhumane and cruel, lewd and lascivious, of a base education, of a fraudulent and turbulent disposition, of a vicious life, pretending to enthusiasms, and working of wonders; but these such as were both in their nature absurd and incredible, and for their use vain and unprofitable: at such a season, and in such a soil, by such means and by such a person (abetted by Associates like himself, whom his arts, or their interests had inveigled to join with him) was this Religion first planted; and for its propagation it had that great advantage of falling in the way of barbarous people, void of learning and civility, and not prepossessed with other notions, or any sense of Religion; who thence (as mankind is naturally susceptible of religious impressions) were capable and apt to admit any Religion first offering it self, especially one so gross as this was, so agreeable to their furious humours and lusts. Afterward being furnished with such Champions, it diffused it self by rage and terror of arms; convincing mens minds only by the sword, and using no other arguments but blows. Upon the same grounds of ignorance and force, it still subsists; neither offering for, nor taking against it self any reason; refusing all examination, and upon extreme penalties forbidding any dispute.

dispute about its truth; being indeed so far (whether out of judgment or fatal instinct) wise, as conscious to its self, or foreboding, that the letting in of a little light, and a moderate liberty of discussing its pretences, would easily overthrow it. • Now that Divine wisdom should chuse those black and boisterous times to publish his will, is, as if the King should purposely order his Proclamations to be made in a tempestuous night, when no man scarce dared to stir out, nor any man could well see what was done, or hear what was said; much fitter surely to that purpose were a serene and calm day; a time of general civility and peace, like that of *Augustus Caesar*. That the declaration of God's mind should issue from the desarts of *Arabia* (that den of robbers) is as if the King should cause his Edicts to be set up in the blindest and dirtiest nook of the Suburbs; the Market-cross surely, or the Exchange (the place of most general and ordinary concourse) such as, in respect to the world, was the flourishing Empire of *Rome*, were more convenient, and wisely chosen for that purpose: that passing over the more gentle and tractable part of his people, a Prince should send his laws to a rabble of *Banditti*; should pick out for his messenger a most dissolute Varlet, attended with a crew of desperate ruffians, resolved to buffet and rifle all they met; were an odd way of proceeding: To communicate his pleasure unto the better and more orderly sort of people (such as were the subjects of that well governed Empire) by persons of good meaning, mild disposition, and innocent behaviour, (such as were the *Apostles* of our Lord) in a quiet and gentle manner (such as these only used) would surely better become a worthy Prince: Thus even the exterior circumstances of *Mahometanism* (both absolutely and in comparison) belonging to its rise, its growth, its continuance (so full of indecency, of iniquity, of inhumanity) ground strong presumptions against its divinity; or rather plainly demonstrate, that it could not proceed from God, whose truth cannot need such instruments, or such courses to maintain it, whose goodness certainly abhors them. But farther, if we look into the matter and inward frame thereof, we shall find it a mass of absurd opinions, odd stories, and uncouth ceremonies; compounded chiefly of the dregs of Christian Heresies, together with some ingredients of *Judaism* and *Paganism* confusedly jumbled, or unskilfully tempered together. From Christian Heresies it seems to have derived its negative Doctrines, opposite to Christianity; as for instance, when allowing Christ much respect, it yet denies his being the Son of God, and that he did really suffer; rejecting his true story, it affixes false ones upon him: as also some positive ones; for example, that unreasonable opinion, so much mis-beseeming God, that God hath a body (*Mahomet* forsooth once touched his hand, and felt it very cold) might be drawn from the *Anthropomorphites*; that Doctrine concerning the fatal determination of all events (so prejudicial to all religion, subverting the foundations of justice between God and man, man's free choice in serving God, God's free disposal of rewards futable to mens actions) they probably borrowed from the *Manichees*, a Sect that much obtained in those *Eastern* parts. The *Jew* contributed his ceremonies of Circumcision and frequent purgations by washing, his abstinence from swines flesh, his allowance of polygamy and divorce: I might add, that perhaps from him they filcht that proud, inhumane, and uncivil humour of monopolizing divine favour and good-will to themselves; so of restraining their own kindness and respect to persons of their profession, or sect; condemning, despising, and hating all the world beside themselves; calling all others dogs, and adjudging all to certain damnation; and which is more, affirming, that all of their belief, how wicked soever their lives have been, shall at length assuredly partake of salvation; so partial do they make Almighty God, so addicted to a mere name and outward shew; feigning him as in shape, so in passions humane, and like themselves. Indeed in this main part of religion, a true notion of God, his nature, his attributes, his method of providence, their doctrine is very peccant, representing him in his nature and actions very unworthily. Their descriptions concerning the state of men after death (that main and principal part of Religion, which gives life and vigour to the rest) whence can we better deduce its original, than from the *Pagan* notions or stories of *Elysium* and *Hades*; what better pat-

tern can we find, whence that paradise of corporeal delight, or rather of brutish sensuality, should be transcribed; which any man sees how poor an encouragement it is, how unworthy a reward to virtue, yea, how much it is apt to detract from, to discourage all performances of reason and honesty? The like we might say of the punishments (which in due correspondence to the rewards they propound) they only or chiefly inflict upon the body; the main part, it seems, of which a *Mahometan* man consists. And must he not be very stupid, who can suffer himself to be persuaded, that such conceits (conceits favourable indeed to pleasure, and indulgent to the flesh, but contrary to virtue, prejudicial to the spirit and reason of man) should come from the God of wisdom and holiness? Farther, how *Mahomet* was inspired, his stories alone will evince; stories patched up out of old histories corrupted, mangled and transplaced; interlarded with fabulous Legends, contrary to all probable records of history (the names, places, times, and all the circumstances whereof he most unskilfully changes and confounds) yea repugnant to the nature and possibility of things; so that in a manner every tale he tells is an evident argument of an ignorant and an impudent Impostour; And he that so blunders and falsifies about matters of fact, who will trust him in matters of right and reason? which things, if it were worth the while, might by various instances be shewed; and you may *every where* receive satisfaction therein. The like might be said concerning its multitude of silly ceremonies, grounded on no reasonable design, nor subservient to any purpose of virtue; the institution whereof no man therefore without injury to the divine wisdom can impute thereto. But I shall only add two farther considerations upon this matter: One, that whatever is good or plausible in this Religion (such as are some precepts of justice and charity, although these confined among themselves) may reasonably be supposed taken from Christianity, which being seniour in standing, may (in points wherein both agree) well go for the mistress; and however that upon the score of such doctrines or laws, we have no reason to think this Religion came from God; for why should he reveal that again, which in a larger extent, upon better grounds, with more advantage, he had declared before; which also then was commonly embraced and acknowledged? I also observe, that this Religion by its own free concessions doth evidently destroy its self: for it admits Christianity once to have been a true doctrine, proceeding from and attested to by God: but Christianity did ever declare it self to be a general, perpetual, perfect and immutable Rule of faith and practice; that never any accessions thereto, any alterations thereof, ought to be made or admitted; that whatever spirit (coming after it) should offer to innovate, or pretend to new discoveries contrary to, or different from it, must be suspected of delusion; foretelling and forewarning against such endeavours that should appear, as fallacious and mischievous: this it appears (by the Writings of those who first planted Christianity; Writings, which no man in his wits can question to be theirs; being through a continual uninterrupted course of times, from the beginning, by general consent of both friends and adversaries, acknowledged and attested to as so; all characters within them imaginably proper for that purpose confirming the same; as also by the current tradition of their disciples, immediate and mediate, extant in records unquestionable; and by all other means conceivable) this, I say, it most plainly appears, was one grand doctrine and pretence of Christianity at first, which *Mahometanism* acknowledging originally true and divine in the gross, must consequently grant it self to be an Imposture.

And thus much seems sufficient to demonstrate that Religion, not to be of a divine extraction. I shall next proceed to consider the pretences of *Judaism*; and to shew that neither it was such a perfect Revelation, as we proved it probable God would vouchsafe to make: But that shall be the subject of another discourse.

Any

And in Jesus Christ, &c.

SERMON XV.

OF THE IMPERFECTION

OF THE Jewish Religion.

EPHES. I. 13.

In whom ye also (trusted) having heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation.

THAT it is probable God should vouchsafe to Mankind a full and clear declaration of his mind and will concerning their duty and their welfare; I did shew: That *Paganism* and *Mahometanism* without reason and truth did or do pretend thereto, I also briefly discoursed; I now proceed to examine the plea, which *Judaism* puts in; and to make good that neither It is well grounded (which, as the cause deserves, I shall do somewhat more largely.) The *Jewish* Religion, we acknowledge, had its birth from the revelation and appointment of God; its truth and its goodness we do not call in question; but yet looking into it, we shall find it in many respects defective, Heb. 7. 12, and wanting the conditions due to such a revelation, as we require. For it ¹⁹ was not universal; (neither being directed to; nor fitted for the nature and needs of mankind;) it was not full and complete, it was not designed to be of perpetual obligation, or use.

1. *First*, I say, this *Revelation* was not general; not directed to, or intended for to instruct and oblige mankind: it self expressly affirms so much: the whole tenour and frame thereof shews it; so do all the circumstances of its rise and progress. That it was intended peculiarly for that small Nation, possessing a very inconsiderable portion of the earth; distinguished, and indeed, as it were, concealed from the rest of mankind both on purpose, and in effect; for it so remained for many Ages, (till the *Macedonian* first, and afterward the *Roman* conquests opened the world and disclosed them) hid in a solitary obscurity; even so far as to scape the observation of the most inquisitive surveyours of the earth;

earth, the most curious searchers into the customs of all people (as of *Herdotus* for instance, who nicely describing the places and manners of the People all about them, could not discern them, and takes no notice of them, although for their peculiar manners otherwise most remarkable, and deserving his mention) appears by express passages in their Law and holy writings: *He sheweth his word unto Jacob, his statutes and his judgments unto Israel; He hath not dealt so with any nation; and his judgments they have not known them:* 'Tis plainly affirmed, that God did make that discovery of his will and mind peculiarly to that people, and to no other, *I the Lord am holy, and have severed you from other people, that ye should be mine;* (saith God to the Jews:) *So shall we be separated, I and thy people, from all the people that are upon the face of the earth* (saith Moses in his address to God;) *Thou art a holy people unto the Lord thy God; The Lord hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth* (saith Moses to that people;) which passages (together with divers others of the same import) being used to engage and encourage a singular obedience, do plainly say, that God transacted with that people singly and separately from all other; taking them (on purpose) as it were, into a corner, at a good distance and beyond hearing of others, that he might there signify alone to them his pleasure, peculiarly concerning them. Yea to this purpose, of maintaining a distance and distinction from the rest of mankind, divers of their laws were appointed; as not only the nature of such laws doth imply, but words annexed to them sometimes express; *I am the Lord your God, which have separated you from other people; ye shall therefore put difference between clean beasts and unclean.* Whence St. Paul calls their law *μεσότηριον φεγγυς*, a partition wall, that fenced that nation, and severed it from others; and an enmity, being framed to set them in distance and variance from the rest of men. That whole business also of this constitution is frequently styled a covenant, made not between God and mankind, but between God and that single nation; a covenant in formal terms mentioning them, and them only; sealed with marks and characters peculiar to them; requiring conditions and duties possible or proper only for them to perform; exhibiting promises only suitable to them; propounding rewards which they only were capable to receive; and punishments, which they only could undergo. *Hear, O Israel*, is the usual style, according to which those laws are directed, *I am the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of the Land of Egypt;* is the introduction to the *Decalogue* it self (which among all parts of that law looks fairest towards a general importance and obligation; which yet is so specially directed, and is indeed peculiarly called the covenant between God and that people; viz. *Synecdochically*, as being the principal part directive of their duty.) In the body of the laws it self, there is often made a distinction between them who were bound to observe it, and others that were not; between *brethren* and *strangers*, between *Hebrews* and *Aliens*; with duties suited and limited in regard to that distinction: (as in the cases of *remitting debts*, *releasing servants*, *exacting use*, and the like;) There are enjoined duties which others could not properly, or decently perform; such as observation of Feasts in commemoration and thankfulness for mercies vouchsafed to that Nation; as also others which could not be observed by all men with any possibility or convenience; such as those of repairing thrice a year to one certain place, established for God's worship; of bringing tithes and oblations thither, and the like; neither was the number of *Priests* and *Levites*, set a-part for God's service, proportioned otherwise, than in respect to that one people. The encouragements also and rewards promised to obedience do incommunicably pertain to them, as also the discouragements from and punishments for disobedience; a long and prosperous enjoyment of the Land of *Canaan* was the meed set before them, if they should obey and make good their part of the covenant; a dispossession thereof, or affliction in it, was the punishment threatned, if they should presume to disobey, and violate those engagements: *Ye shall walk in all the Laws, which the Lord your God hath commanded you; that ye may live, and that it may be well with you; and that ye may prolong your days in the land, which ye possess. Hear therefore, O Israel, and observe to do it, that it may be well with thee;*

with thee, and that ye may encrease mightily, as the Lord God of thy fathers hath promised thee, in the land that floweth with milk and honey: Such were the promises exciting to obedience, and the threatnings deterring from disobedience were answerable, as every where in their law and story is visible.

I may also hereto add; that as the laws and rites of this Religion were designed only for this People, as they did only agree to their circumstances; so they were only suited to their inclinations, and their capacities; their inclinations, which were very stubborn and perverse; their capacities, which were very low and gross, as their own Prophets do upon many occasions affirm and complain; being dissentaneous and repugnant to the common humour and genius of mankind: so experience discovered them to be, when they became more apparent and observable: *Judaorum mos absurdus, sordidusque*: (The Jewish way of life is uncouth and sordid, was Tacitus his censure, *Hist. V. 5.*) and, They run counter to all men (was St. Paul's imputation on that People, *1 Thess. 2. 15.*) to which the general conceit of men concerning them did agree. So little plausible or probable was their way; so liable to dislike and contempt, which argues it unfit to be commended by the God of wisdom to the generality of mankind.

By which and many other like considerations obvious enough may appear, that this dispensation was not (either according to its nature, or in its design) general, or such as respected the main body of mankind, but rather very particular and restrained; designedly restrained to the oblation and use of one place or people, if compared to the world of men, inconsiderably narrow and small; the fewest of all people God himself says they were. That in fine, this constitution had only the nature of a municipal law, imposing burthens, and indulging privileges upon one City or Territory; not of a common civil sanction, established for the obligation, use and benefit of the whole Commonwealth or Empire subject to the Almighty King.

'Tis not therefore in reason to be taken for such a Revelation, as we argued needful for us, and to be expected from him, who (as the Psalmist, as reason, *Psal. 145. 8.* as experience tells us) is good to all, and whose tender mercies are over all his works; from him, who is the common father of all, and (as St. Paul expresseth it) hath made of one blood *πᾶν ἔθνος ἀνθρώπων*, the whole nation and commonwealth of mankind; from him, who cannot be in affection any-wise fond or partial; a respecter of persons, or of nations (as St. Paul in the second to the Romans, and St. Peter in the Acts also implies.) From him, who is not only the Maker, but (as our Apostle also styles him) the Saviour of all men; and (as even the Hebrew Wise-man asserts) careth for all alike; being desirous that all men should be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth; not willing that any should perish, but that all men should come to repentance. From him, who is not only *φιλεβραϊός*, or *φιλέλλην*, (a lover of Jews, or of Greeks;) but *φιλάνθρωπος*, a lover of men, and *φιλόψυχος*, a lover of souls; who, lastly, is not the God of the Jews only, but of the Gentiles also, as St. Paul urges this argument; and as also the reason of the thing and the voice of nature doth declare: From this God, I say, so disposed, so related toward us all, so equally concerned in regard to us; so impartial in his affection, so unconfined in his bounty; we should have reason to expect rather no Revelation at all, than one so scant, and pinched in such narrow bounds; so ill proportioned to the glory due to himself, to the need and benefit of mankind. We cannot reasonably imagine that he should contract the effects of his goodness, or the manifestations of his glory, to so slender a parcel of mankind, (no better qualified, no more deserving such special regard, than the rest; as himself to repress their fond conceits, and, probably, in way of anticipation, to intimate his design of farther extending that favour in due season to others, who might pretend thereto with as much right and reason as themselves, doth sometime declare.) That he, who hath freely dispensed the influences of Sun and Stars to all alike, should cause the light of his heavenly truth to shine, as it were, but into one small closet of his spacious house; leaving all the rest, so many stately rooms thereof, encompassed with shades of ignorance and error; that he should pour down the showers of his blessings spiritual (otherwise than he hath done those

those natural) upon one only scarce discernible spot of ground; letting all the world beside (like a desert of sand) lie parched with drought, overspread with desolation and barrenness.

This Revelation therefore was not in this respect sufficient; wanting in its nature and design that due condition of generality and amplitude. But,

2. Farther; As this Revelation was particular, so was it also partial; as God did not by it speak his mind to all, so did he not therein speak out all his mind. Our *Apostle*

Ἐπὶ τῇ παλαιᾷ νόμῳ ἔκειτο, ὅτε ἡ πολλὴ αἰείας πολιτείας ἡ ἀκρίβεια, ὅτε εἰσαγωγή τῆς δέουσας, ὅτε παιδικὰ τὰ παραγγέλματα, ὅτε τὸ γάλα, ὅτε ὁ παιδαγωγὸς, ὅτε ὁ λύχνος, ὅτε ὁ τύπος, καὶ ἡ σκιά. Chryl. Tom. 6. Or. 44.

Heb. 8. 7.
7. 18.

Gal. 3. 21.
ἡ δὲ ζωοποιεῖν.

Rom. 8. 3.
τὸ ἀδύνατον τῆς νόμου ἐν ᾧ ἡστένευεν

to the *Hebrews* chargeth it with blameableness; ἐν πρώτῳ ἡμεμπτῶν, if the first covenant had been blameless; with imperfection, with weakness, with unprofitableness, (ἀδότησις μὲν γὰρ γίνεται προβάσεως ἐν πολλῇ δὲ τὸ αὐτῆς ἀδυνεῖ, καὶ ἀνωφελές. Οὐδὲν γὰρ ἐτελείωσεν ὁ νόμος. There is made an abolition of the precedent commandment for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof: For the law made nothing perfect;) He means all this in degree and in comparison to what was possible, and in some respects needful. Which charge may be easily made good (*a priori*) considering both the parts thereof which direct, and those which excite to practice; together with the means and aids enabling, and facilitating obedience to the laws, or rules enjoined; also, (*a posteriori*,) if we regard the fruits and effects thereof. Surveying first, I say, the directive part, we may observe, both a redundancy in things circumstantial or exterior, and a defectiveness in things substantial and interior: there be ritual institutions in vast number very nicely described, and strongly pressed; The observation of times and places, the distinction of meats and of habits, (*touch not, taste not, handle not*) corporeal cleansings and purgations; modalities of exterior performance in sacrifices and oblations, those δικαιώματα σαρκὸς (justifications of the mere flesh, that only concerned the body, or outward man, and could not perfect the observers conscience; could neither satisfy or edify his mind and inward man) we see with extreme punctuality prescribed and enjoined, some of them under very heavy penalties (of utter extermination and excision.) While moral duties (duties of justice and charity, yea of temperance and sobriety it self,) and spiritual devotions (so exceedingly more agreeable to rational nature, and which could not but be much more pleasing to God) were more sparingly delivered in precept, less clearly explained, not so fully urged with rational inducements; nor, in a due proportion guarded with rewards. Many things were plainly permitted, or tacitely connived at (as *polygamy*, and *divorce*; some kinds of retaliation, cursing, revenge; some degrees of uncharitableness) which even natural reason dislikes, or condemns. So faulty was that dispensation as to the part thereof directive of life; and it was no less in that part, which promotes and secures good practice, by applying fit excitements to obedience, and fit restraints from disobedience; rightly managing those great instruments and springs of humane activity, natural courage, hope and fear. Nothing so damps mens alacrity in endeavour, as desperation or diffidence of good success; nothing so quickens it as a confidence, or strong presumption thereof: And how then could they be very earnest in endeavours to please God, who were not assured of (yea had so much reason to diffide in) God's placability and readiness (upon repentance) to forgive sins wilfully and presumptuously committed, such as no man surely lives altogether free from? The not opening a door of mercy seems discouraging and apt to slacken performance of duty; what was then the shutting it up close, the bolting it with that iron bar: *Cursed is he, that abides not in all things written in this law to do them?* which at least will exclude assurance, will quash the hopes of mercy; will consequently enervate the sinews of care and industry in serving God. Neither were the rewards of either kind (those that spurr'd to obedience, those that stop'd from disobedience) in measure or in kind such as the reason of things doth afford and require. They were only temporal, and chiefly corporeal or sensible; such as belonged to the outward state of this transitory life, which neither can deserve much regard, nor are apt to have great efficacy: for who will in effect, why should any man in reason highly value the

Deut. 27. 26.
Gal. 3. 10.

the accommodations of this short and uncertain life? who will, who should be greatly terrified with the inconveniences thereof? whom probably would such considerations sufficiently animate to encounter and sustain the perils, the difficulties, the troubles and the disgraces, to which often the practice of virtue is exposed? whom would they guard from the enchantments of pleasure, profit and honour, alluring men to sin? the pleasures of sense how improper an encouragement, how unworthy a recompence are they for the labours and achievements of virtue? incomparably better surely, more worthy of regard, and more effectual upon man's reason; more apt to produce and to promote real virtue and hearty piety, are the rewards concerning the future state of our immortal soul; which yet 'tis a question whether that law doth ever mention; 'tis plain, it doth not clearly propound and apply them. Indeed as to evident discovery concerning the immortality of man's soul, or the future state (so material a point of Religion, of so grand moment and influence upon practice) even the *Gentile* Theology (assisted by ancient common Tradition) seems to have out-gone the *Jewish*, grounding upon their revealed law; the *Pagan* Priests more expressly taught, more frequently inculcated arguments drawn from thence, than the *Hebrew* Prophets; a plain instance and argument of the imperfection of this Religion.

"Ὅτε πάντα ὑπὸ σαρκὶ καὶ ᾧ ἔσαν λόγος ἔδει. Chryl. Tom. 6. Or. 98. Περὶ ἐσχάτων ἐδέποτε λόγος ἔδει μελλόντων μνήμη, &c. Chryl. ad Olymp. 6. p. 60. Vid. Tom. 7. n. 46.

I subjoin God's not thereby (in an ordinary certain way, according to any pact or promise) affording, or exhibiting such interior influences of grace upon the minds of men; as, considering the natural frailty, blindness and impotency of men, appears necessary to render them obedient to the rules of duty, to guide them in the ways of truth and goodness, to free them from error and sin, to shield and animate them against temptation; is a main defect in that Religion; apt to breed fear in the onset upon duty, to nourish doubt in the performance thereof, to settle despair upon a fall or defeat. It presented to mens eyes the obligation to duty, the difficulty thereof, the danger of transgressing it, but did not openly represent the means requisite to perform it. And what can be more discouraging or discomfoting than to see one's self, upon great peril and penalty, obliged to that, which is apparently very hard, or (considering his strength) impossible, no help to support being visible? especially joining the consideration before touched, that no evasion by pardon, no rise by repentance doth appear. Whence we may well infer, that indeed, in effect, this dispensation was what St. Paul calls it *διανομία θανάτου & διανομία κατακρίσεως* (*a ministry of death and condemnation*), *a subjection to a curse; a killing letter*; bearing nothing less in the looks and language thereof, than certain death and unavoidable ruine; (*a lying under insupportable slavery both to the guilt and punishment of sin.*) *If thou doest ill sin lieth at the door.*

2 Cor. 3. 7, 9.
Gal. 3. 10.
2 Cor. 3. 6.
Gen. 4. 7.

Neither in discoursing thus do we lay any misbeseeming imputation upon God, the Author of that Religion; the making so imperfect a Revelation no-wise being disagreeable to his wisdom, his goodness, or his justice. As for a time he might withhold the declaration of his mind to all mankind, so might he (upon the same or like grounds of wise counsel) forbear to declare some part thereof to that People: no special reason appears that could oblige, that might induce him not to be reserved as well in part to these few men, as in whole to those, all the rest of men; yea, there be good reasons assignable, why the divine wisdom should be then so sparing of its mind, why God should only shew his back parts (as it were) to *Moses*, and *not let him see his face*; (not discover all of his nature and of his pleasure to him) why then he should seem to delight in, to lay so much stress on those carnal and ceremonious observances; why he should forbear to exact that height of spiritual duty, and not draw men to compliance with the best motives of pure reason. A dawning of light perhaps more became that morning of times, than a meridian brightness; that infancy of the world was not it may be ripe for a more deep and perfect instruction; that Nation however (to whose state, to whose disposition and capacities those laws

and institutions were adapted) was very unfit for the highest and hardest lessons. For a Nation it was (as from infallible hands we have it) not wise, or considerate; not grave, or constant; not meek, or pliable; but a very stupid and heady, a very fickle and humorous, a very froward and stubborn generation of men; *They are a nation void of counsel, neither is there any understanding* (was said of them at first by him, who delivered their law, or rather by God himself who enjoined it.) *And, I knew that thou art obstinate, and thy neck is an iron sinew, and thy brow brass: I have even from the beginning declared it to thee* (saith the Prophet concerning the house of Jacob: alluding it seems to those many passages in the Law, where they are termed a *stiff-necked people*: incapable thence both of the finest notions and the more rigorous precepts; like children, by reason of the grossness of their apprehension, and the unruliness of their passion they were not *οἱ ἀκούοντες ἀπὸ τοῦ ὅτου* (*proper auditours*) of a more pure and accurate discipline; wherefore as such the divine wisdom and goodness was pleased to deal with them; dispensing with the infirmities of their age, condescending to the meanness of their capacities, feeding them with milk, alluring them with pretty shews, scaring them with frightful appearances, indulging them with innocent trifles, pastimes and sports, so tempering his ordinances, as might best serve to keep them in good humour; to draw and entice them easily unto somewhat good, to curb and restrain them from mischief. Whence St. Paul calls those institutions with good reason *elements* (*poor and mean elements, and elements of the world; rudiments of knowledge and discipline*, suited to the capacity of the first age, and the meanest rank; such as vulgar and silly people were fit to learn, and able to practise) with good reason he calls the Law a *pedagogue*, that by instilling into those *νῆπιος* (those *infants* or little children, so also he terms them) some imperfect notions of truth; by keeping them in some good order did prepare them for a higher instruction, did predispose them toward a better course of life. Indeed, we may easily conceive that such variety of superficial formalities might well agree to childish and plebeian fancies; but to men of somewhat elevated minds, and well improved reason; of sound judgment, and large experience; who had tasted, and could relish rational entertainments (and such in some measure and comparatively are men generally born and brought up in countrys and places, where civility hath obtained; at least they are capable of being so, fit means being used to render them so) they must needs be *insipid and disgustful*. In the study of truth, and practice of vertue there are alluring beauties and sweetneses; which it cannot but displease him, who hath seen and felt them, to be diverted from, by an obligation to attend (so precisely) upon such an abundance of petty, circumstantial, exteriour observances; to be forced, I say, to chew such husks of things, to him, who thereby must neglect so delicious kernels, cannot but be grievous and irksome. Wiser men are never much affected with laborious and tedious pomps; they are designed always to amuse children, and the common sort. I add, that this dispensation was suited not only to the childish fancy, but to the slavish spirit of that People; who having in them little of ingenuity, or willingness freely to do good; would be apt to wax not only dronish and lazy, but sturdy and insolent; had they not been kept under and inured to something of burthen and toil. Such all wise men know to be the proper course of managing people of slavish temper; but toward men of a disposition more ingenuous, tractable and free (such as commonly men civilized, and well governed are or may become) such a proceeding were incongruous; they will either refuse to undergo such unnecessary burthens, or bear them unwillingly; their obedience will be none, or lame, or unkindly and heartless. God therefore dealt according to wisdom with the *Jews*, when he imposed such burthens upon their shoulders, when he pinched their stiff necks with such yokes, when he detained them in such fetters; (so they were, and so they are truly called by our Apostles; burthens intollerably heavy; yokes very galling and vexatious; fetters very strait and grievous; which they reasonably therefore reckon it a very valuable privilege and benefit, purchased by our Saviour for us, to be loosed from)

Deut. 32. 28.

Vid. Jer. 4.

22. 5. 4.

Neh. 9.

Ila. 48. 4.

Deut. 31. 27.

Exod. 32. 9.

Deut. 9. 6.

13. 5c.

Vid. Psal. 78.

36, 57.

Gal. 4. 9. 3.

Gal. 3. 24.

Gal. 4. 9. 0.

Acts 15. 10.

28.

Gal. 5. 1.

Gal. 3. 23.

from) but such a dispensation could not be convenient for the rational nature in common and for perpetuity; it neither becomes God himself, who will not without need or profit vex his creatures; who cannot be fully satisfied with performances of so mean a sort; who necessarily doth affect services of a more excellent nature and importance (those spiritual services of love, reverence and gratitude; of purity, righteousness and goodness.) It doth not sute man, not being apt to perfect his nature, not being able to satisfy his mind. As he, by the improvement and use of his reason, will easily discern the small worth of such performances, so will he not readily comply with them without regret; but will soon apprehend the matter to be indeed, as *St. Paul* represents it, that an obligation to such rites is *a bond against us*, (*ἑταδελφας το κατ' ημων χειρο- Coloss. 2. 1. γερον τοις δεγμασι, ο λο παρεναντιον ημων*) which in reason he may expect to be wiped out and *cancelled*; that a law consisting of such precepts hath an *enmity* Gal. 3. 24. or repugnance to his nature; that such a dispensation is a *pupillage* and a *slave-* Gal. 4. 1. ry, which he earnestly must desire to be redeemed and mancipated from. Gal. 4. 3, 5. Ec.

Thus doth this Revelation upon many respects, grounded on the very intrinsic nature thereof, appear partial and imperfect; and consequently not such as that, which we reasonably may expect from the divine wisdom and goodness.

'Tis true (which some may deem an objection against our discourse, but I should rather take for a good confirmation thereof) that God did afterward annex some labels (as it were) to this deed; that he imparted by degrees farther manifestations of light and grace to that people by the instructions, and by the exemplary practices of prophets and holy men raised up among them by his especial instinct and order; in a manner and upon occasions extraordinary. The Prophets frequently declared, that God had not much delight in those ceremonious observances, nor would accept them otherwise than as proceeding from good dispositions of mind, and as accompanied with practices of moral duty and more spiritual piety; that he chiefly did require of them hearty reverence toward himself, and submission to his will; strict justice and tender charity toward their neighbours; meekness and patience in their behaviour; temperance and sobriety in all their conversation. By them also he discovered more of his gracious disposition, and of his merciful intentions toward them; that he would not be extremely rigorous in punishing the transgressions of his law; that he would not refuse pardon to the most grievous sins, not remain irreconcilable toward the most hainous offenders, upon their sincere repentance and amendment of life. By the practices of holy men he also shewed, that the rigour of that ceremonious law was mitigable; that in some cases its obligation might be relaxed, and its observance dispensed with; that a service more refined and rational was especially acceptable to God; that he loved a purer devotion, a perfecter righteousness, a higher charity than such as the letter of their law prescribed. By them also he intimated (which their devotions plainly infer) that he not only exacted such duties, but was ready to afford them his assistance to the performing them; by teaching and admonishing them within; enlightning their minds, and enflaming their affections; directing, exciting, and quickning them to obedience. Thus did that morning of divine knowledge, from the first dawning, by degrees grow more light-some; yet never arrived to a perfect daylight; the shadows were not quite dispersed; the whole *horizon* of heavenly truth was not disclosed thereby. Even those arbitrary and extraordinary dispensations of farther instruction are so many good arguments, that God did not primarily intend the *Jewish* Law for a complete delivery of his mind; his reserving so much to be upon occasion detected, implied, that more still might rest behind; accordingly as indeed we see, that the future state, and immortality it self, was not by the Prophets fully brought to light; that the better covenant, established upon better assurances, was not yet revealed; that all means requisite for the glory of God, for the good of man, were not thoroughly provided for.

Of which conclusion we shall add this one further probation, that *Judaism* did not serve (in effect) sufficiently to better mens lives; to qualify a competent number of men for God's favour, or for their own happiness; by disposing

- their minds to any tolerable degree of true sanctity, piety, and righteousness acceptable to God, profitable to humane society, perfective of man's nature. 'Tis a point that St. Paul in his *Epistle* to the *Romans* insisteth much upon, and excellently applies to this same purpose: The *Jews* were highly conceited of their way; scorning the rest of men as altogether ignorant of God's will, and incapable of his favour; but St. Paul represses their arrogance, by shewing the difference was not so great (as they imagined) between them and others; not even in those respects; for that the special revelation, which they were so proud of, had not produced effects considerably better in them, than the light of reason and the law of nature (means so despicable in their esteem) had brought forth in others: Which charge being made good, 'tis evident they had no reason to prize their way so much, or to confide therein, as perfect; as thoroughly, in the best manner, and in reasonable measure, sufficient to qualify them for God's favour, or to bring them into a state of happiness; (yea 'tis plain, upon that supposition, in some respects their way had the disadvantage, and made their condition worse than that of other men; rendring their faults more grievous and inexcusable, more provoking God's displeasure against them; especially seeing, upon the tenour of their Religion, they had scarce any better ground to presume of pardon or impunity, than other men had from instincts of nature, from rational conjecture. Now that such a charge upon them is no slander, we need no other probations than what the continual stream of their own Histories doth represent concerning their manners; than the many full and plain testimonies of their own Prophets concerning them; than the extreme punishments by divine justice inflicted upon them; than the common reputation they have continually had among men, grounded upon experience. What is their history but one continued tragedy, as it were, setting out the various strange rebellions and apostasies of that people, with the miserable consequences proceeding from them? what do their prophetic writings contain beside pathetical expostulations, severe reproofs, dreadful comminations of Judgment upon them, for their prodigious impieties, iniquities and lewdnesses; general in extension over all persons, excessive in degree, by no means curable or corrigible? Run ye to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem (Jerusalem, that place of universal concourse, the heart of that nation, the special seat and sanctuary of their religion) see now and know, and seek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find a man; if there be any that executeth judgment, that seeketh the truth, and I will pardon it (says Jeremy 5. 1.) There is a conspiracy of her prophets in the midst thereof (of Jerusalem) like a roaring lyon ravening the prey: Her priests have violated my law, and have profaned my holy things; her princes are like wolves; the people of the land have used oppression and exercised robbery: And I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it; but I found none, saith Exekiel: And the rest frequently harp upon the same string. But these Prophets, you'll say, lived in unhappy times; so circumstantiated, that no religion could have much prevailed upon mens minds and lives; such as make every religion liable to the same exceptions: Well, but Isaiah, one would think, lived in better times; for how many better Kings had that Nation (that more strictly practised or earnestly promoted piety) than Hezekiah? yet, A sinful nation, a people laden with iniquities, a seed of evil doers, were they, it seems, even then; the land was defiled under the inhabitants thereof; the whole head was sick, and the whole heart faint; from the sole of the foot even to the head there was no soundness in the body of that nation. Yea, when did that religion flourish in greater vigour and strength, when had it more advantage of exerting its best virtue, than in the peaceful and prosperous times of that great and mighty, that good and zealously pious Prince, King David? yet even in his reign, according to his own observation and testimony, they were (generally) corrupt, and did abominable works; they all were gone aside, and were altogether become filthy; there was none that did good, no not one. But we need not urge particular instances, since we have it so often affirmed in gross, that the manners of that people, from first to last, were constantly naught and offensive to God: The children of Israel, and the children of Judah (saith God him-

himself in *Jeremy*) have only done evil before me from their youth. And again; Since Jer. 7. 25. the day that your fathers came forth out of the land of Egypt unto this day, I have Jer. 16. 12. even sent you all my servants the prophets, daily rising up early and sending them; —II. 7. yet they hearkened not unto me. The law, although by extraordinary persons, in fittest opportunities, with utmost vehemence and diligence inculcated and urged upon them, proved continually ineffectual to produce the fruits of piety and righteousness. The same you may see confessed by *Ezra*; and not only ac- Ezra 9. 7. knowledged, but evidently demonstrated by *Nehemiah* in a punctual narra- Neh. 9. tion, deduced from the beginning to his time; (in the ninth chapter of that Book.) Again; The heavy calamities by divine justice so often inflicted, so long continued upon them; and at last God's so visible utter dereliction and disowning them, do also sufficiently declare what their deserts, and what their qualities have been; as also what good may ever be expected from them. For as God never punishes grievously without a proportionate cause, so he never quite deserts, but in a desperate case, when no competent emendation may be expected. He is not wont to lop off the branches, but when they grow dead and barren; he never cuts down the tree, while there is any hope of fruit. This providence therefore toward that people shews, that in God's esteem, that law is to be laid aside, as an instrument grown useless, and unfit for his purposes; unfit to serve his glory, to further mens good.

I add; That through all course of times their manners have not procured in a manner from any men any good-will, or respect; but indeed the common dislike, contempt and hatred of men: they have always (since well known and observed in the world) been reputed a sort of people not only above all men vain and superstitious, addicted to fond conceits and fabulous stories, but extremely proud and arrogant, churlish and sours, ill-natured and false-hearted toward all men; not good or kind, yea not so much as just or true toward any but themselves:

*(Non monstrare vias eadem nisi sacra colenti;
Quasitum ad fontem solos deducere verpos;*

*Juven. Sat.
14.*

Apud ipsos fides obstinata, misericordia in promptu, sed adversus omnes alios hostile odium.)

*Tac. V. pag.
621.
Vid. Grot. de
Jure B. lib.
II. 15. 9.*

Such are the obvious characters of them, such were their humours noted to be; humours, not only implausible, but really blameable, deservedly offensive and odious; being contrary to the common sense, to the natural ingenuity of man. They have been long, as we see them now to be, partly for the vanity of their conceits, partly for the baseness of their minds and manners, and partly also for the wretchedness of their condition, the scorn and obloquy of all Nations.

Now the tree, which hath always bore such fruits (so unfavoury, so unwholesome) we have no reason to admire, to esteem excellent and perfect: It might be good for those times, when men willingly did feed on acorns, on crabs, on bramble-berries; but cannot so well serve now, when higher improvements of reason, when philosophy and learning by a general influence upon the world have prepared the palates of men to relish, their stomachs to digest more delicious and more wholesome fare. But I

3. Proceed to shew the third defect, which I at first observed, in this Religion, that it was not designed for perpetual obligation and use: (As it was particular in respect of the persons, to whom it was directed, whom it obliged; as it was partial and incomplete in its frame, so it was, according to its design, temporary and mutable.) This conclusion we might infer from what hath been said concerning the narrow extent, and concerning the intrinsick imperfection thereof; for supposing a new general and perfect revelation made to mankind, (such as we asserted probably should be) that would naturally swallow and void those which are particular and imperfect; as comprehending them, it would render them useless; as supplying the defects, correcting the defaults, or removing, paring away the superfluities of them, it would discover them unfit for continuance. As rivers run into the Sea, as shadows flee before

- before the Sun, so these small and shallow, these dusky and faint revelations would discharge themselves into, would vanish before a complete and universal one. Nothing in nature, or in providence, that is scant or defectuous, can be stable and lasting. Thus, I say, is this a conclusion, a consequence of those which preceded; but we have another more convincing sort of evidence to prove it by (most valid *ad homines*) even by many pregnant intimations; yea many express remonstrances and predictions, that God did intend in due time to introduce a great change in affairs of this kind; to refine and reform the state of things; to break open those inclosures, and to remove those bars of separation; to enlarge the bounds of his dominion, and to receive all nations into the fold of his most special care and love: In fine, that he would dispense a general full revelation of his mind and will, of his grace and favour to mankind; such as should not be consistent with that particular and partial law, such as implies a disannulling thereof for obligation, and disabling it for use.
- Mal. 3. 1, 3. Heb. 9. 10. The holy writings of that people acquaint us, that God intended to raise up another Prophet (for extraordinariness and eminency) like to Moses, which should have words by God put into his mouth (new words surely, new revelations from God; for why should he with that solemnity be sent to utter stale matters?) whom they should, upon peril of their lives and welfare, be particularly obliged to hearken (that is, to yield attention and obedience) unto. That the days should come, when the Lord would make a new covenant with the house of Israel, different from that which he made with their fathers after their delivery from Egypt; not to be written upon stones, but impressed upon mens hearts; in regard to which passage we may with the Apostle, to the Hebrews well argue: If the first had been faultless, and designed to abide in force, there would have been no place found for the second; and that, by speaking of a new covenant, he antiquated (or declared his intention to antique) the old one.
- Deut. 18. 15, 18. Acts 3. 23. Jer. 31. 31. Heb. 8. 7, 13. Jer. 3. 16. That time should be, when they should say no more, The ark of the covenant of the Lord; neither should it come to mind, neither should they remember it, neither should they visit it; they are the words of the Prophet Jeremy, concerning better times to come; wherein God should give them pastors according to his own heart, which should feed them with knowledge and understanding; but in a way, 'tis evident, altogether different from the Jewish institution; without any regard to the ark of their covenant, that seat and emblem of God's especial presence among them.
- Psal. 110. 4. That another priesthood should infallibly (for God swore so much) be established, not after the order of Aaron, but after the order of Melchisedeck (not appointed to offer carnal sacrifices, but to impart spiritual benedictions.)
- Isa. 66. 18, 21. That time should be, when God would gather all nations and tongues, and they should come and see his glory; and out of them God would take (that which the Mosaical constitution would not any-wise permit) for Priests, and for Levites.
- Psal. 132. 13. Mich. 4. 1, 2, 7, 8 &c. Joel 2. 28. 3. 16. That there should appear a Sion; a mountain seated above all mountains (visible and conspicuous to all the world) wherein God would place his perpetual residence (the seat of his worship, of his especial presence and influence) to which all nations should flow (or willingly resort) to learn God's will, and walk in his ways; (which Sion could not be that literal one, long since desolated and disregarded; and which however, did it stand in repute, could be no convenient receptacle, or resort, for all the world; 'tis surely another spiritual Sion, or mystical rock, which is prophesied of.)
- Isa. 65. 17. 66. 22. That God will create new heavens, and a new earth; (a thoroughly new world, or new state of things;) such as that the former should not be remembered, nor come into mind.
- Joel 2. 28. That God would pour his spirit of Prophecy upon all flesh; (although we see the prophetic spirit hath long deserted the Jewish nation, not so much as any pretence thereto remaining.) That the earth should be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea; (Judaism surely is not this knowledge, which never did, nor is ever likely to fill the earth.) That from the rising of the sun, to the going down thereof, God's name should be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense should be offered unto his name, and a pure offering; (In every place incense, acceptable to God, should be offered;

not only at Hierusalem, to which the Jewish service was confined.) That a time was determined to finish transgression, and make an end of sins; to make a reconciliation for iniquity, and to introduce everlasting righteousness, to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy. Dan. 9. 24.

That God would send him, so much needed and desired by all nations to whom the gathering of the people should be; the Sun of righteousness, arising with salvation in his wings; the Redeemer that should come to Sion; the Messenger of the covenant; whom God would give for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth; to cause to inherit the desolate heritage; the righteous branch, to be raised up unto David; to reign and prosper, executing judgment and justice in the earth; whose name should be called, the Lord our Righteousness; whom God would anoint to preach good tidings to the meek, and bind up the broken-hearted, &c. that is, in fine, God in due time would send the *Messias*, to enlighten the world with a perfect instruction; to reveal God's will, and declare his mercy to mankind; to erect an universal spiritual kingdom in the minds and hearts of men, reducing them to fuller knowledge, and to better obedience of God. These places of Scripture (to which many others might be added) do sufficiently evince, that the *Mosaical* dispensation was in the design thereof mutable and transitory; that God intended what the Apostle affirms effected by our Saviour, an abrogation of the precedent command for its weakness and unprofitableness. Hag. 2. 7. Gen. 49. 10. Mal. 1. 3. 4. 2. Isa. 59. 20. 49. 8. 61. 1. Jer. 23. 5, 6. Heb. 7. 18. Thus doth God's design concerning the abolition of this Religion appear by verbal testimonies; the same we see also declared by real effects: his providence hath made good his word, he hath not only disobliged men from that Religion, but hath manifestly discountenanced it; yea hath disabled even the most obstinate adherents in opinion and will thereto, from the practice and exercise thereof, according to its primitive rules and prescriptions. Long is it (for above fifteen hundred years) since they, exiled from their ancient country, and scattered over the world, have wanted a place whither to resort, wherein to perform those most weighty parts of worship and service to God, oblation of sacrifices, incense and tithes: Their Tribes being confounded, the distinction of priesthood and people seems taken away; all the mysterious emblems of God's special presence, all the tokens of God's favour and endearment to them are embezel'd and quite lost; nothing is left substantial or solemn in their Religion, which if they would they could put in practice: all that they retain of their ancient institution is the observation of some petty formalities, in matters of less importance; which also they have so blended and corrupted with impure mixtures of their own device and forgery, (false and impious opinions, ridiculous and uncouth ceremonies, idle and absurd stories) that we may justly suppose genuine *Judaism* no where to be found; that it cannot be, nor is indeed any where practised.

So that what reason shewed fit to be, what God had declared should be, that experience doth attest to be done; the cessation and abolition of that way of Religion, both as to obligation and use.

So I pass over this second step of my intended discourse; That no other Religion, excepting Christianity, which hath been, or is in being, can reasonably pretend to have proceeded from God, as an universal, complete and final declaration of his mind and will to mankind. Such as we argued it probable that so wise a God, so just a Lord, so gracious a father, would sometime afford to his poor miserable creatures and children, the sons of *Adam*.

I have two great steps yet to take; One, that Christianity is in it self a doctrine and law endowed with the fore-mentioned conditions; in all respects worthy to come from God, apt to promote his glory, and procure man's benefit. Another, that it *de facto* did proceed from God, was attested to by him, and established by his authority. Which propositions I shall hereafter by God's grace endeavour to prove.

And

And in Jesus Christ, &c.

SERMON XVI.

OF THE EXCELLENCY

OF THE Christian Religion.

I COR. II. 6.

We speak wisdom to those which are perfect.

THE meaning of these words (upon viewing the context, and weighing the scope of St. Paul's discourse) I take to be in effect this; That however such parts of the Christian doctrine, which St. Paul discovered unto those, whom he began to instruct therein, (*the milk which he gave the babes in Christ to drink*) especially as propounded, proved and persuaded in so plain and simple a manner, without advantages of subtile reasoning or elegant language, might seem to persons really ignorant, unskilful, and dull of apprehension (although much conceited of their own knowledge; wit and reach) or to men prepossessed with contrary notions, and corrupt affections, to be foolish and unreasonable: Yet that the whole doctrine, such as it is in it self, being entirely disclosed unto *perfect men* (that is, to men of an adult and improved understanding, well disposed and capable, void of prejudicate conceits, and cleansed from vicious dispositions) would appear *wisdom*; wisdom, that is not only exactly true, but highly important, and very well suited to the attainment of the best ends; even those ends, which it pretendeth to bring about, which are manifestly the most excellent that any knowledge can aim at; the glorifying of God, and salvation of man: this I suppose to be St. Paul's assertion here; and thereof it is my intent, by God's assistance, to endeavour now some declaration and proof, by representing briefly some peculiar excellencies and perfections of our Religion; which may serve to evince the truth, and evidence the wisdom thereof; to make good, that indeed our Religion well deserveth the privilege it doth claim of a divine extraction, that it is not an invention of man, but (as St. Paul calleth it) *the wisdom of God*, proceeding

1 Cor. 3. 1, 2.

2 Cor. 2. 7.

coming from no other Author, but the God of truth and wisdom. It is indeed a common subject, and so the best ever should be; it is always profitable, and now seasonable, to inculcate it, for the confirmation of our selves, and conviction of others, in this Age of wavering and warping toward infidelity; wherefore regarding more the real usefulness of the matter, than the squeamish fancy of some auditors, I shall without scruple propound what my own meditation hath suggested about it.

1. The first excellency peculiar to the Christian doctrine I observe to be this; that it assigneth a true, proper and complete character or notion of God (complete I mean, not absolutely, but in respect to our condition and capacity) such a notion as agreeth thoroughly with what the best reason dictateth, the works of nature declare, ancient tradition doth attest, and common experience doth intimate concerning God; such a character as is apt to breed highest love and reverence in mens hearts toward him; to engage them in the strictest practice of duty and obedience to him: it ascribeth unto him all conceivable perfections of nature in the highest degree, it asserteth unto him all his due rights and prerogatives, it commendeth and justifieth to us all his actions and proceedings. For in his Essence it representeth him One, Eternal, perfectly simple and pure, Omnipresent, Omniscient, Omnipotent, Independent, Impassible and Immutable; as also, according to his essential disposition of Will and natural manner of acting, most absolute and free, most good and benign, most holy and just, most veracious and constant; it acknowledgeth him the maker and upholder of all Beings, of what nature and what degree soever; both material and immaterial, visible and invisible; it attributeth to him Supreme majesty and authority over all: It informeth us, that he framed this visible world with especial regard to our use and benefit, that he preserveth it with the same gracious respect; that he governeth us with a particular care and providence; viewing all the thoughts, and ordering all the actions of men to good ends, general or particular. It declareth him in his dealings with rational creatures very tender and careful of their good, exceedingly beneficent and merciful toward them, compassionate of their evils, placable for their offences, accessible and inclinable to help them at their entreaty, or in their need; yet no-wise fond, or indulgent to them; not enduring them to proceed in perverse or wanton courses; but impartially just, and inflexibly severe toward all iniquity obstinately pursued; it, in short, describeth him most amiable in his goodness, most terrible in his justice, most glorious and venerable in all his ways of providence: whatever perfections in essence, state or practice, either Philosophers (by rational collection from innate notions, or from contemplation of natural effects, or upon observing occurrences in humane affairs) or other institutions from the reliques of primitive tradition, by politick reflection upon things, from other fountains, or by other means whatever, have by parts (imperfectly, obscurely and faintly) attributed to God; all those our Religion in a full, clear and peremptory manner, with advantage beyond what I can express, doth ascribe and assert unto him; not intermixing therewith (as other doctrines and institutions may be observed to do) any thing unworthy of him, or misbecoming him; adjoining nothing repugnant to that which natural light discerneth or approveth; but shewing somewhat beyond what it can descry, concerning God's incomprehensible nature and manner of subsistence, his unsearchable counsels of wisdom, his admirable methods of providence, whereby he hath designed to commend his goodness to us, and to glorify his justice; which sorts of truths exceeding man's reach to devise or comprehend as it becometh God (who so far transcendeth us in wisdom and knowledge) to reveal them, so they wondrously conspiring with the perfections of God otherwise discernible by us, do argue or confirm the divinity of the doctrine, which acquainteth us with them: For a doctrine, how plausible soever, which should teach us nothing about God, that by other means could not be found out, and whose bottom common sense might not fathom, there were no urgent cause why we should derive it from heaven, or why we should not rather deem it the invention of some witty or subtile man. But such a doctrine

Matt. 11. 25.
— Neither
knoweth any
man the Fa-
ther, save the
son, and he to
whomsoever
the son will
reveal him.

as this (which as it telleth us nothing about divine things, that contradic-
 eth reason, so it informeth us many things, which no understanding of man
 had ever conceived, none can penetrate) we may justly presume to come
 from a superiour wisdom, we must at least avow it worthy of God; in the
 contrivances of man's wit or fancy about things of this nature (as in di-
 vers instances it hath happened) most probably many flaws and incongrui-
 ties presently would have appeared; they would have clashed with them-
 selves, or with the dictates of common reason: that, for instance, God
 should out of his own bosom send down his eternal Son to partake of our
 nature, and appear in our flesh, that with utmost advantage might dis-
 cover God's will and merciful intentions toward us, that he might set be-
 fore us an exact pattern of good life; that by his obedience and patience
 he might expiate our sin, and reconcile God to mankind; that he might raise
 in us a hope of, and lead us in the way to happiness; this indeed is a my-
 stery, and a depth of wisdom, which we should never have thought of, nor
 can yet thoroughly sound by thinking, which we better may admire, than
 we can understand; but neither doth good reason disallow it, nor can dis-
 prove it; yea good reason so far confirmeth it, as it cannot but admit it to
 import nothing but that which is plainly true and most credible, the im-
 mense goodness and justice of God; concerning which nothing ought to
 seem strange or uncouth to us, since even by the care expressed in matters
 of ordinary providence divine goodness appeareth so unaccountably vast and
 high, that upon consideration thereof worthily might Job and the Psalmist
 exclaim; *What is man that thou shouldest magnifie him, and that thou shouldest*
set thy heart upon him? Lord, what is man, that thou takest knowledge of him,
or the son of man, that thou makest such account of him!

Job 7. 17.

Psal. 144. 3.

Now thus to infill into the minds of men a right and worthy notion of
 God, is palpably a great excellency of any doctrine or Religion: for beside
 that a true knowledge of God, (even barely considered as in way of theory
 most perfective of our understanding, it being conversant upon the noblest
 object of contemplation) is in it self very desirable; and upon the same
 ground error in divine things is no small evil or defect; both these, such
 knowledge and such error respectively, are very considerable, as having a
 powerful influence upon action; for according to mens conceptions about
 God is their practice, religious and moral, very much regulated; if men con-
 ceive well of God, they will be guided and moved thereby to render him
 a worship and an obedience worthy of him, and acceptable to him; if they
 are ignorant of him, or mistake about him, they will accordingly perform
 services to him, or pretences of service, which shall neither become him,
 nor please him; (God by such misconceptions being transformed into an i-
 dol, their religion will become vile or vain superstition.) And since all
 men apprehend the example of God a perfect rule of action, that they can-
 not do better than to resemble and imitate him, such as they conceive God
 to be, such in good measure they will endeavour to be themselves, both in
 their disposition and demeanour; whence infallibly the virtues and defects
 which lie in their notion, will exert and diffuse themselves into their life.

Hæ. 66. 3.

I. 13, 14.

Εὐλόγως τοῖς
 μὲν μοχθηρίαις
 φαύλας ἔχον
 τὰς περὶ θεῶν
 διανοήσεις ἀ-
 νάγκη, τοῖς δ'
 ἀρεταῖς αἰ-
 σῶσαι. Clem.
 Strom. 7.
 (pag. 511.)

2. A second great excellency, peculiar to the Christian institution is this,
 that it faithfully informeth us concerning our selves, concerning our nature,
 our original, our end, all our state past, present and final; points about
 which otherwise by no reason, no history, no experience we could be well
 resolved or satisfied: it teacheth us that we consist of a frail mortal body,
 taken from the earth and fashioned by God's hand, and of an immortal spi-
 rit derived from heaven, and breathed out of God's mouth, whereby we
 understand the dignity of our nature, and nobleness of our descent, our near
 alliance, and our great obligation to God; and consequently how it concern-
 eth us to behave our selves both in regard to God, and toward our selves, in
 a manner answerable to such a relation, worthy of such an high birth and
 quality: it sheweth us, that we were originally designed by a voluntary o-
 bedience to glorifie our Maker, and in so doing to partake of joy and felici-
 ty from him; that accordingly we were created in a state agreeable to those
 purpo-

purposes, wherein we were fit to serve God, and capable thereby ever to continue happy: but that by our unworthy distrust and wilful disobedience we cast our selves from thence, and laps'd into this wretched state of inward blindness, error and disorder, of outward frailty, sorrow and trouble: it acquainteth us farther, how being thus estrang'd from God, and exposed to the effects of his just displeasure, we are yet again by his exceeding mercy and favour put into a capacity of recovering our selves, of being re-instated in a condition happy far beyond that, from which we fell, by returning unto God, and complying with his will declared unto us; as also how continuing obstinately in our degeneracy and disobedience we shall assuredly plunge our selves deeper into an abyss of endless misery: it fully representeth unto us, what shall be our future state and final doom, how it shall be suited to our demeanours and deserts in this life, what a strict trial, what a severe judgment all our actions (even our passant words, and our secret thoughts) must hereafter undergo, and how upon the result we shall become either exceedingly happy, or extremely miserable for ever. It is indeed this Doctrine only, which fully resolveth us about this weighty inquiry, which hath so much perplexed all men, and with so much irresolution exercised Philosophers, wherein the final End and Happiness of man consisteth, and what is the way of attaining it; assuring us, that it consisteth not in any of these transitory things, nor in a confluence of them all, but in the favour and the enjoyment of God, with the blessings flowing thence; that this happiness is only by a sincere and constant obedience to God's holy laws, or by the practice of such a piety and such a vertue which this doctrine prescribeth, to be obtained: These most important truths so useful both for the satisfaction of our minds, and the direction of our lives, this doctrine unfoldeth; I call them truths, and that really they are such even their harmony and consistence between themselves, their consonancy with inferences from all sorts of principles, which we can apply for learning of truth, with what about these matters reason collecteth, tradition reporteth, experience doth imply, may well persuade us; for that man was first made and constituted in a happy state, that he was for his misbehaviour detrued thence; that hence he is become so very prone to vice, and so much subject to pain, that our souls do abide after death, that after this life there shall be a reckoning and judgment, according to which good men (who here are often much afflicted) shall be rewarded with joy, and bad men (who commonly prosper here) shall be requited with pain, the wisest men upon these grounds, always have surmized; and their rational conjectures our Religion with a positive and express assertion doth establish. So great a light doth it afford (which is no small perfection thereof) to the knowledge of our selves, and our chief concernments, the objects next to God, and what concerneth him, best deserving our inquiry and information.

It is a peculiar excellency of our Religion, that it prescribeth an accurate rule of life, most congruous to reason, and suitable to our nature; most conducive to our welfare, and our content; most apt to procure each man's private good, and to promote the publick benefit of all; by the strict observance whereof we shall do what is worthy of our selves and most becoming us, yea shall advance our nature above it self into a resemblance of the divine nature; we shall do God right and obtain his favour, we shall oblige and benefit men, acquiring withall good-will and good respect from them, we shall purchase to our selves all the conveniences of a sober life, and all the comforts of a good conscience; For if we first examine the precepts directive of our practice in relation to God, what can be more just, or comely, or pleasant, or beneficial to us, than are those duties of piety, which our Religion doth enjoin? what can be more fit, than that we should most highly esteem and honour him, who is most excellent? that we should bear most hearty affection to him, who is in himself most good, and most beneficial to us? that we should have a most awful dread of him, who is so infinitely powerful, holy and just? that we should be very grateful unto him from whom we have received our being, with all the comforts and

As ye have received of us how ye ought to walk, and to please God.
1 Thess. 4. 1.

conveniences thereof? that we should entirely trust, and hope in him, who can do what he will, and will do whatever in reason we can expect from his goodness, and can never fail to perform what he hath promised? that we should render all obedience and observance to him, whose children, whose servants, whose subjects we are born; by whose protection and provision we enjoy our life and livelihood? Can there be a higher privilege than liberty of access, with assurance of being favourably received, in our needs to him, who is thoroughly able to supply them? Can we desire upon easier terms to receive benefits, than by acknowledging our wants, and asking for them? Can there be required a more gentle satisfaction from us for our offences, than confession of them, accompanied with repentance and effectual resolution to amend? Is it not in fine most equal and fair, that we should be obliged to promote his glory, who hath obliged himself to further our good? The practice of such a piety as it is apparently λογική λατρεία (*a reasonable service*) so it cannot but produce excellent fruits of advantage to our selves, a joyful peace of conscience, and a comfortable hope, a freedom from all superstitious terrours and scruples, from all tormenting cares and anxieties; it cannot but draw down from God's bountiful hands showers of blessings upon our heads, and of joys into our hearts; whence our obligation to these duties is not only reasonable, but very desirable.

Am. Marc.
l. 22.

Consider we next the precepts by which our Religion doth regulate our deportment toward our neighbours and brethren (so it styeth all men, intimating thence the duties it requireth us to perform toward them) and what directions in that kind can be imagined comparably so good, so useful as those which the Gospel affordeth? An honest *Pagan* Historian saith of the Christian Profession, that *nil nisi justum suadet & lenē*; the which is a true, though not full character thereof. It enjoineth us, that we should sincerely and tenderly love one another, should earnestly desire and delight in each others good, should heartily sympathize with all the evils and sorrows of our brethren, should be ready to yield them all the help and comfort we are able, being willing to part with our substance, our ease, our pleasure for their benefit or succour; not confining this our charity to any sorts of men, particularly related or affected toward us, but in conformity to our heavenly father's boundless goodness extending it to all; that we should mutually bear one anothers burthens, and bear with one anothers infirmities, mildly resent and freely remit all injuries, all discourtesies done unto us retaining no grudge in our hearts, executing no revenge, but requiting them with good wishes and good deeds. It chargeth us to be quiet and orderly in our stations, diligent in our callings, veracious in our words, upright in our dealings, observant of our relations, obedient and respectful towards our superiours, meek and gentle to our inferiours; modest and lowly, ingenuous and compliant in our conversation, candid and benign in our censures, innocent and inoffensive, yea courteous and obliging in all our behaviour toward all persons. It commandeth us to root out of our hearts all spite and rancour, all envy and malignity, all pride and haughtiness, all evil suspicion and jealousy; to restrain our tongue from all slander, all detraction, all reviling, all bitter and harsh language; to banish from our practice whatever may injure, may hurt, may needlessly vex or trouble our neighbour. It engageth us to prefer the publick good before any private convenience, before our own opinion or humour, our credit or fame, our profit or advantage, our ease or pleasure; rather discarding a less good from our selves, than depriving others of a greater. Now who can number or estimate the benefits that spring from the practice of these duties, either to the man that observeth them, or to all men in common? O divinest Christian charity, what tongue can worthily describe thy most heavenly beauty, thy incomparable sweetness, thy

Τοιαύτη γάρ ἡ ἀγάπη δύναμις τῶν ἀπελευθερώσας καὶ ἀπελευσάντων ἐξίσσης ποιῆσαι χαίρειν, κοινὰ τὰ αὐτῆς πλησίον ἀγαθὰ περὶ πολλοῦ ἐκτελεῖν. Chrys.
Arđ. 19.

more than royal clemency and bounty? how nobly dost thou enlarge our mind beyond the narrow sphere of self and private regard into an universal care and complacence, making every man our self, and all concerns to be ours? how dost thou entitle us unto, how dost thou invest us in
all

all the goods imaginable; dost enrich us with the wealth, dost prefer us with the honour, dost adorn us with the wisdom and the vertue, dost bless us with all prosperity of the world, whilst all our neighbours good by our rejoicing therein becometh our own? how dost thou raise a man above the reach of all mischiefs and disasters, of all troubles and griefs, since nothing can disturb or discompose that soul, wherein thou dost constantly reside, and absolutely reign? how easily dost thou without pain or hazard, without drawing blood or striking stroke, render him that enjoyeth thee an absolute conquerour over all his foes, triumphant over all injuries without, and all passions within; for that he can have no enemy, who will be a friend to all, and nothing is able to cross him, who is disposed to take every thing well? how sociable, how secure, how pleasant a life might we lead under thy kindly governance? what numberless sorrows and troubles, fears and suspicions, cares and distractions of mind at home, what tumults and tragedies abroad might be prevented, if men would but hearken to thy mild suggestions? what a paradise would this world then become, in comparison to what it now is, where thy good precepts and advices being neglected, uncharitable passions and unjust desires are predominant? how excellent then is that doctrine, which brought thee down from heaven, and (would but men embrace thee) the peace and joy of heaven with thee?

If we farther survey the laws and directions which our Religion prescribeth concerning the particular management of our souls and bodies in their respective actions and enjoyments, we shall also find, that nothing could be devised more worthy of us, more agreeable to reason, more productive of our welfare and our content. It obligeth us to preserve unto our reason its natural prerogative, or due empire in our souls, and over our bodies, not to suffer the brutish part to usurp and domineer over us; that we be not swayed down by this earthy lump, not enslaved to bodily temper, not transported with tumultuary humours, not deluded by vain fancy; that neither inward propensions, nor impressions from without be able to seduce us to that which is unworthy of us, or mischievous to us. It enjoyneth us to have sober and moderate thoughts concerning our selves, suitable to our total dependance upon God, to our natural meanness and weakness, to our sinful inclinations, to the guilt we have contracted in our lives; that therefore we be not puffed up with self-conceit, or vain confidence in our selves, or in any thing about us (any wealth, honour or prosperity.) It directeth us also to compose our minds into a calm, serene and chearful state; that we be not easily discomposed with anger, or distracted with care, or over-borne with grief, or disturbed with any accident befalling us; but that we be content in every condition, and entertain patiently all events, yea accept joyfully from God's hand whatever he reacheth to us. It commandeth us to restrain our appetites, to be temperate in all our enjoyments, to abstain from all irregular pleasures, which are base in kind, or excessive in degree; which may corrupt our minds, or impair our health, or endamage our estate, or stain our good name, or prejudice our peace and repose: it doth not prohibit us the use of any creature, whence we may receive innocent convenience or delight, but indulgeth us a prudent and sober use of them all, with the sense of God's goodness, and thankfulness to him, who bestoweth them upon us. Our Religion also farther ordereth us (so far as our necessary occasions or duties permit) to sequester and elevate our minds from these low and transitory things; from the fading glories, the unstable possessions, the vanishing delights of this world; things indeed unworthy the attention, unworthy the affection of an heaven-born and immortal spirit; that we should fix our thoughts, our desires, our endeavours upon objects most worthy of them, objects high and heavenly, pure and spiritual, infinitely stable and durable: *Not to love the world, and the things therein; to be careful for nothing, but to cast all our care upon God's providence; not to labour for the meat that perisheth, not to trust in uncertain riches; to have our treasure, our heart, our hope, our conversation above in heaven; such directions our Religion prescribeth, by compliance with which, if man be at all capable of being happy, assuredly his* happy-

happinefs must be attained; for that no present enjoyment can render a man happy, all experience proclaimeth; the restless motions we continually see the woful complaints we daily hear, do manifestly demonstrate.

And who seeth not the great benefits and the goodly fruits accruing from observance of these laws and rules? who discerneth not the admirable consent of all these particular injunctions in our Religion with that general one,

Vid. Grot. de
Ver. 4. 12.
Phil. 4. 8.

Whatever things are true, whatever things are just, whatever things are honest, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there be any vertue or any praise, that we should mind such things, and practise them? Such, and far more excellent than I am able to describe,

* Τί ἂν τις εἴποι τῷ περὶ ἀγαθῶν τῶν φιλοσοφῶν, τῷ ἐργῶν νόμων τῶν ἀρετῶν, τῷ ἀγγεληνῆς πολιτείας τῶν ἐνταξίαν; τοῦτον γὰρ ἡμῶν εἰσρηγῶν βίον, τοῦτον ἡμῶν ἐδικὸν νόμον, τοιαύτῳ κατεσῆσθε πολιτεῖαν, ὥς τὰς τέτοις χρησθῶμεν ἀγγεληνῶν γίνεσθαι, καὶ ὁμοίους θεῷ καὶ τῶν δυνάμεων τῶν ἡμετέρων. Chryl. in Joh. 1. 14.
"Ὅσα ὁ θεὸς πᾶσι καλῶς ἐρεῖται, Χριστιανῶν ἐστίν. Just. M. Apol. 1.
Vid. Lud. Viv. in Aug. de Civ. D. 10. 4.

Quæ disputationes, quæ litera quorumlibet Philosophorum, quæ leges quorumlibet civitatum duobus præceptis, ex quibus Christus dicit totam legem prophetasque pendere, ullo modo sint comparanda? Aug. Epist. 3. ad Voluf.

Vid. Chryl. Ἀνθ. 19.

Διὰ τὸν ἐνδεχόμενον τὸν Χριστιανὸν ἀνδρῶν διὰ τὸ τῷ Χριστῷ γνώσεως καὶ διδασκαλίας σωτηρίαν, καὶ δικαιοσύνην, κατεσῆσθε τε βίαν καὶ ἀρετὴν ἀνδρῶν ἐν σέβει καὶ ὁμολογίᾳ ἐνδὸς καὶ ἔξω πάντων θεῶν διατρέπεται. Euseb. hist. 1. 4.

is the rule of Christian practice; a rule in perfection, in beauty, in efficacy far surpassing all other rules; productive of a goodness more complete, more lovely, more uprightful, than any other doctrine or institution hath been, or can be able to bring forth; much exceeding not only *the righteousness of blind Pharisees*, but all the vertue of the most sage * *Philosophers*; somewhat in part concurrent therewith Philosophy hath descried and delivered ('tis no wonder it should, since all of it is so plainly consonant to reason;) yet what Philosophy hath in this kind afforded; is in truth, if compared with what our Religion teacheth, exceedingly meagre, languid and flat: two words here, *Thou shalt love the lord thy God with all thy heart, and thy neighbour as thy self*, do signify more, do contain in them more sense and savour, to the judgment and relish of a well disposed mind, than the *Ethicks* of *Aristotle*, the *Offices* of *Cicero*, the *Precepts* and *Dissertations* of *Epictetus*, the many other Volumes of Philosophical morality all put together; in matter our Rule is far more rich and full, more sweet and sapid than theirs; in force and efficacy it doth also (as we shall hereafter see) far excel them.

4. We may hereto annex this consideration, which may pass for another peculiar advantage of our Religion, that as it delivereth so excellent and perfect a rule of life, so it delivereth it unto us pure from any allay embasing; free of any clog encumbering it; for that it chiefly, and in a manner only requireth of us a rational and spiritual service, consisting in performance of substantial duties, plainly necessary or profitable; not withdrawing us from the

Negotiosa scrupulositates. Tertull. in Marc. 2.

Quadam pauca eademque factu facilissima, & intellectu augustissima, & observatione castissima, Dominus, & Apostolica tradidit disciplina, sicuti est baptismi sacramentum, & celebratio corporis & sanguinis Domini. Aug. de Doct. Chr. 3. 9.

Dominus noster Jesus Christus leni iugo nos subdidit, & sarcina levi; unde sacramentis numero paucissimis, significatione præstantissimis societatem novi populi colligavit; sicuti est Baptismus Trinitatis nomine consecratus, communio corporis & sanguinis ipsius, & siquid aliud in Scripturis canonicis commendatur. Aug. Ep. 118. ad Januar.

practice of solid piety and vertue by obligations to a tedious observance of many external rites; not spending the vigour of our minds upon superficial formalities (or *busy scrupulosities*, as *Tertullian* termeth them) such as serve only to amuse childish fancies, or to depress slavish spirits. It supposeth us men, men of good understanding, and ingenuous disposition, and dealeth with us as such; and much more such it rendreth us, if we comply therewith. The ritual observances it enjoineeth, are as few in number, in nature simple and easy to perform, so evidently reasonable, very decent, and very useful; apt to instruct us in, able to excite us unto the practice of most wholesome duties: which consideration sheweth this doctrine to be complete, suitable to the most adult age, and best constitution, to the most ripe and improved capacities of man. But farther,

5. Our Religion hath also this especial advantage, that it setteth before us a living copy and visible standard of good practice; wherein we have all its precepts compacted as it were into one body, and at once exposed to our view.

Longum est
iter per præ-
cepta, breve
& efficax per
exempla. Sen.

Example yieldeth the most compendious instruction, together with the most efficacious incitement to action; but never was there, or could be, any example in either respect comparable to this; never was any so thoroughly perfect in it self, so purposely designed, so fitly accommodated for imitation, or so forcibly engaging thereto, as this: there is not one flaw, one spot, one false or uneven

even stroke in all this copy, so that we are secure from doing amiss in transcribing any part thereof; it was intended to conduct us through all the parts of duty, especially those which are most high and difficult to our frail and decayed nature, general charity, self-denial, humility and patience: it was admirably squared for the imitation of all men, the person in whom it shined being as it were indefinite, and unrestrained to any single condition; he being in right and power superiour to the greatest Princes, though according to choice and in outward parts inferiour to the meanest subjects; having under his command the largest wealth, although enjoying none; being able readily to procure to himself what glory and respect he pleased, yet pleasing to pass obscure and disregarded; so teaching those of highest rank to be sober and condescensive, those of lowest degree to be patient and content in their respective states; teaching all men not to rest in, nor much to regard these present things, but singly in all their doings above all things to seek God's honour, with main resolution and diligence to prosecute his service: and as to all degrees, so to all capacities was his practice suited, being neither austere nor remiss, formal nor singular, careless nor boisterous; but in a moderate, even and uniform course so tempered, that persons of all callings and all complexions easily might follow him in the practice of all true righteousness, in the performance of all substantial duties toward God and toward man. It is also an example attended with the greatest obligations and inducements to follow it; the great excellency and high dignity of the person, being the most holy first-born Son of God, heir of eternal Majesty; our manifold relations to him, being our Lord and Master, our best friend, our most gracious Redeemer; the many inestimable benefits received by us from him, all that redemption from extreme misery, and capacity of perfect happiness, do import, are so many potent arguments engaging us to imitate him.

6. Farther, Our Religion doth not only thus truly and fully acquaint us with our duty; but, which is another peculiar vertue thereof, it buildeth our duty upon most solid grounds, presseth it with most valid inducements, draweth it from the best principles, and driveth it to the best ends: No philosophy can in any measure represent vertue so truly estimable and eligible, can assign so evident and cogent reason why we should embrace it and strictly adhere thereto, can so well discover or describe the excellent fruits that grow upon it, as doth this Philosophy of ours, as the ancient Fathers are wont to call it. Other Philosophies have indeed highly commended vertue, and vehemently exhorted thereto; but the grounds on which they laid its praise are very sandy, the arguments by which they enforced its practice are very feeble, the principles from which they deduced it, and the ends which they propounded thereto, are very poor and mean, if we discuss them; at least if they be compared with ours: Vertue, said they, is a thing of it self, upon account of its own native beauty and worth, abstracting from all reward or profit springing from it, very admirable and desirable; it is beside a very pleasant and very useful thing, begetting tranquillity and satisfaction of mind; yielding health, safety, reputation, pleasure, quiet, and other manifold conveniences of life: but can so magnificent and so massy a fabrick of commendation stand firm upon such foundations as these? are these principles of love and admiration toward we know not what, these ends of temporal advantage and convenience, so noble or worthy? are the accommodations of this short and uncertain life a proper encouragement, or a just recompence for the laborious atchievements of true vertue? are these weapons sufficient to fortify men, or these discourses able to animate them in resisting the temptations which avert from vertue, or avoiding the enchantments which allure to vice? Will men, I say, readily, for the sake of an imaginary or insensible thing (a goodly name only, for all they see) which representeth no more of benefit attending it, cross the bent of their natural inclinations, forfeit their present ease, reject certain fruitions of pleasure, wave occasions of getting to themselves profit, honour and power, goods so manifestly substantial and grateful to nature? will they undergo contentedly the difficulties, encounter the dangers, sustain the pains, the disgraces, the losses commonly incident to vertue? No surely, when it cometh to earnest trial,

trial, it will hardly seem reason or wisdom so to do. But the Christian Doctrine, as it comprizeth, and in an inferiour order urgeth also such grounds and arguments, so it doth exhibit others far more solid and forcible: it commendeth goodness to us, not only as agreeable to man's imperfect and fallible reason, but as conformable to the perfect goodness of God, as the dictate of his infallible wisdom, as the resolution of his most holy will; as enjoined by his unquestionable authority, as our indispensible duty, and only way to happiness: the principles, from which it willeth us to act, are love, reverence and gratitude to God, hearty good-will toward men, and a sober regard to our own true welfare; the ends which it prescribeth, are God's honour, publick edification, and the salvation of our own souls: it stirreth us to good practice by minding us, that we shall thereby resemble the supreme goodness, shall express our gratitude toward that great benefactor, unto whom we owe all that we have; shall discharge our duty, pay due honour, perform faithful service to our Almighty Lord and King; that we shall thereby surely decline the wrath and displeasure of God, shall surely obtain his favour and mercy, with all sorts of blessings needful or profitable for us; that we shall not only avoid regrets and terrors of conscience here, but escape endless miseries and torments; we shall not only procure present comfort and peace of mind, but shall acquire crowns of everlasting glory and bliss. These surely are the truest and firmest grounds upon which a right estimation of vertue can subsist, these are motives incomparably most effectual to the embracing thereof; these are the purest fountains whence it can spring, the noblest marks whither it can aim; a vertue so grounded, so reared, is certainly most sound and genuine, most firm and stable, most infinitely beneficial. But farther,

7. 'Tis a peculiar advantage of Christianity (which no other Law or Doctrine so much as pretendeth to) that it not only clearly teacheth us, and strongly persuadeth us to so excellent a way of life, but provideth also sufficient help and ability to practise it; without which (such is the frailty of our nature, as experience proveth, that) all instruction, all exhortation, all encouragement would avail little. Other laws, for want of this, are in effect *ministries of condemnation*, racks of conscience, parents of guilt, and of regret; reading hard lessons, but not assisting to do after them, imposing heavy burthens, but not enabling to bear them: Our Law is not such; 'tis not a *dead letter*, but hath a *quickning spirit* accompanying it; it not only soundeth through the ear, but stampeth it self upon the heart of him that sincerely doth embrace it; it always carrieth with it a sure guide to all good, and a safe guard from all evil: If our mind be doubtful or dark, it directeth us to a faithful Oracle, where we may receive counsel and information: If our passions are unruly, if our appetites are outrageous, if temptations be violent and threaten to overbear us, it leadeth us to a full magazine, whence we may furnish our selves with all manner of arms to withstand and subdue them: If our condition, in respect to all other means, be disconsolate or desperate, it sendeth us to a place, where we shall not fail of refreshment and relief; it offereth, upon our earnest seeking and asking, the wisdom and strength of God himself for our direction, our aid, our support and comfort in all exigencies. To them, who with due fervency and constancy *ask it*, God hath in the Gospel promised to *grant his holy Spirit*, to guide them in their ways, to admonish them of their duty, to strengthen them in obedience, to guard them from surprizes, and assaults of temptation, to sustain them, and cheer them in afflictions. This advantage, as it is proper to our Religion, so it is exceedingly considerable; for what would the most perfect rule or way signify without as well a power to observe it, as a light to discern it? and how can man (so ignorant, so impotent, so inconstant a creature; so easily deluded by false appearances, and transported with disorderly passions; so easily shaken and unsettled by any small assault) either alone without some guidance perceive, or by himself without some assistance prosecute what is good for him, especially in cases of intricacy and difficulty? how should he, who hath frequent experience of his own weakness, not be utterly disheartned and cast into despair either of standing fast in a good state, or of recovering himself from a bad one; of rescuing himself from any vicious inclination

2 Cor. 3. 7, 9.
Rom. 5. 20.
Aug. de Spir.
et lit.
Τοῖς ἐν βίῳ
ἐπαρρησιάζουσιν
ἰσχυρὸν πρὸς τὴν
λοιπὴν σωτηρίαν
ἐμπνέει.
Clem. Alex.
Strom. 6. p.
523.

Luke 11. 13.

nation, or attaining any vertuous habit, if he did not apprehend such a friendly power vigilantly guarding him, ready upon all occasions to succour and abett him? This consideration it is, which only can nourish our hope, can excite our courage, can quicken and support our endeavour in religious practice, by assuring us, that there is no duty so hard, which by the grace vouchsafed us, we may not achieve; that there is no enemy so mighty, which by the help afforded us we cannot master; so that, although we find our selves *able to do* Phil. 4. 13. *nothing of our selves, yet we can do all things by Christ that strengthneth us.*

8. Another peculiar excellency of our Religion is this, that it alone can appease and satisfy a man's conscience, breeding therein a well grounded hope, and a solid comfort; healing the wounds of bitter remorse, and anxious fear, which the sense of guilt doth inflict: *There is no man* (as King Solomon said, ^{2 Chr. 6. 36. Ecclef. 7. 20.} *and all men know*) *who sinneth not*; who doth not find himself in thought, word and deed frequently thwarting the dictates of reason, violating the laws of piety and justice, transgressing the bounds of sobriety; who consequently doth not in his own judgment condemn himself of disorder, and of offence committed against the world's great Lawgiver and Governour, the just Patron of right and goodness; who thence doth not deem himself obnoxious to God's wrath, and is not fearful of deserved punishment from him: which fear must needs be fostered and augmented by considering, that as past facts are irrevocable, so guilt is indelible, and punishment, except by the voluntary remission of him that is offended, inevitable; as also that there are no visible means of removing or abating such guilt by any reparation or amends that he can make, who is more apt to accumulate new offences, than able to compensate for what he hath committed. Now in such a case, some man indeed may frame to him- ^{Pena potest demi, culpa perennis erit. Ovid.} self hopes of mercy; may from the experience of God's forbearance to punish, and continuance of his bounty to sinners, presume that God is placable, and will not be rigorous in his proceedings with him, may hopefully guess, that in favour God will admit his endeavours at repentance, will accept the compensations he offereth in lieu of his duty, may suffer his guilt to be atoned by the sacrifices he presenteth; Yet can no man upon such presumptions ground a full confidence that he shall find mercy; he cannot however be satisfied upon what terms mercy will be granted, in what manner it shall be dispensed, or how far it shall extend; God never having exhibited any expresse declarations or promises to those purposes. No man therefore can otherwise than suspect himself to be in a bad state, or esteem himself secure from the pursuits of justice and wrath; as he knoweth that *sin lieth at the door*, so he cannot know but that ^{Gep. 4. 7.} vengeance may lie near it; hence common reason, as well as the Jewish Law, is a *ministry of death*, and a *killing letter*, carrying nothing in the looks or lan- ^{2 Cor. 3. 6.} guage thereof, but death and ruine; hence is a man (if at least he be not befuddled into a careless stupidity) shut up in an irksome bondage of spirit, under ^{Rom. 8. 15.} the grievous tyranny, if not of utter despair, yet, of restless suspicion about his condition, which as it quencheth in his mind all steady peace and joy, so it dampeth his courage and alacrity, it enervateth his care and industry to do well, he doubting what success and what acceptance his undertakings may find; it also cooleth in him good affections towards God, whom that he hath offended he knoweth, and questioneth whether he can be able to reconcile.

From this unhappy plight our Religion thoroughly doth rescue us, assuring us, that God Almighty is not only reconcileable; but desirous upon good terms to become our friend, himself most frankly proposing overtures of grace, and soliciting us to close with them; it upon our compliance tendereth, under God's own hand and seal, a full discharge of all guilts and debts however contracted; it receiveth a man into perfect favour and friendship, if he doth not himself wilfully reject them, or resolve to continue at distance, in estrangement and enmity toward God. It proclaimeth, that if we be careful to amend, God will not be *extreme to mark what we do amiss*: that iniquity, if we do not in- ^{Psal. 130. 3, 4. Ezek. 18. 30.} corrigibly affect and cherish it, *shall not be our ruine*; that although by our infirmity we fall often, yet by our repentance we may rise again, and by our sincerity shall stand upright; that our endeavours to serve and please God (although imperfect and defective, if serious and sincere) will be accepted by him;

him : this is the tenour of that great covenant between heaven and earth, which the Son of God did procure by his intercession, did purchase by his merits of wonderful obedience and patience, did ratify and seal by his blood ; did publish to mankind, did confirm by miraculous works, did solemnize by holy institutions, doth by the Evangelical ministry continually recommend to all men ; so that we can no-wise doubt of its full accomplishment on God's part ; if we be not deficient on ours : so to our inestimable benefit and unspeakable comfort doth our Religion ease their conscience, and encourage them in the practice of their duty, who do sincerely embrace it, and firmly adhere thereto.

1 Cor. 1. 17.

2. 2.

Ἀπλῆς ὁ μὴ
ἔχων ἄλλῃ
θείας ἐστὶν
Εὐρίπ.

Vid. Orig. in

Cell. lib. 6.

Lact. 3. 1.

Matt. 7. 29.

9. The last advantage which I shall mention of this doctrine, is this, that it propoundeth and asserteth it self in a manner very convincing and satisfactory : it propoundeth it self in a style and garb of speech, as accommodate to the general capacity of its hearers, so, proper to the authority which it claimeth, becoming the Majesty and sincerity of divine truth ; it expresseth it self plainly and simply, without any affectation or artifice, without ostentation of wit or eloquence, such as men study to insinuate and impress their devices by : It also

Οὐ γὰρ κτύπον ῥημάτων, ἐδὲ λέξεως
κόμπον, ἐδὲ ὀνομάτων καὶ ῥημάτων
κόσμον καὶ συνθήκην διόμοιδα ποιήσιν
καὶ ἀνόντων (πρόβα γὰρ ταῦτα τῆ φιλοσο-
φίας ἀπάσης) ἀλλὰ ἰσὺν ἀμαχον καὶ
δείαν, καὶ δούματων ὁρῶν ἀμνηχανον
δύναμιν, καὶ μυείων χορηγίαν ἀγαθῶν.
Chryl. proam. in Joh.

speaketh with an imperious and awful confidence, such as argueth the speaker satisfied both of his own wisdom and authority ; that he doubteth not of what he saith himself, that he knoweth his hearers obliged to believe him ; its words are not like the words of a wise man, who is wary and careful that he slip not into mistake (interposing therefore now and then his may-be's and perchances) nor like the words of a learned Scribe grounded on semblances of

reason, and backed with testimonies ; nor as the words of a crafty Sophister, who by long circuits, subtle fetches, and sly trains of discourse, doth inveigle men to his opinion ; but like the words of a King, carrying with them authority and power uncontrollable, commanding forthwith attention, assent and

Ecclef. 8. 4.

Quæ quidem tradita sunt breviter,
ac nude, nec enim decebat aliter, ut
cum Deus ad hominem loqueretur, ar-
gumentis afferret suas voces, tanquam
fides ei non haberetur, sed ut oportuit
est locutus, quasi rerum omnium maxi-
mus iudex, cujus non est argumentari,
sed pronunciare verum. Lact. 3.

obedience ; this you are to believe, this you are to do, upon pain of our high displeasure, at your utmost peril be it ; your life, your salvation dependeth thereon : such is the style and tenour thereof, plainly such as becometh the Sovereign Lord of all to use, when he shall please to proclaim his mind and will unto us. It freeth us from laborious and anxious enquiries, from endless disputes and janglings, from urging ineffectual arguments, and answering cross difficulties, &c. It doth also assert it self and approve its truth to the reason of man the most advantageously that can be, with proofs most suitable to it self, and

Legant nostra—quàm excellenter,
quàm divinè, non tanquam ex philoso-
phorum concertationibus strepere, sed
tanquam ex oraculis Es Dei nubibus
intonare. Aug. de Civ. Dei 2. 19.

in themselves most effectual ; waving those inferiour methods of subtle argumentation and plausible language, with which men are wont to confirm or set off their conceits ; which how weak they are, how unfit to maintain truth, their unsuccessfulness doth evince ; seeing by those means

scarce any man hath been able thoroughly either to settle himself in, or to draw others to a full persuasion concerning any important truth, discolored from sense : such methods therefore the Christian doctrine hath waved (or rather slighted, as beneath it self) applying arguments to the demonstration of its truth, far more potent, more sublime, and indeed truly divine ; besides its intrinsic worth, or the excellency shining in its self (which speaketh it worthy of God, and goeth more than half way in proving it to proceed from him) there is no kind of attestation needful or proper, which God hath not afforded thereto. God is in himself invisible and undiscernible to any sense of ours, neither could we endure the lustre and glory of his immediate presence ; it must be therefore by effects of his incommunicable power, by works extraordinary and supernatural (such as no creature can perform or counterfeit) that he must, if ever, convincingly signify his purpose or pleasure to us ; and such innumerable hath God vouchsafed to yield in favour and countenance of our Religion ; by clearly predicting and presignifying the future revelation of this doctrine by express voices, and manifest apparitions from heaven, by suspending and thwarting the course of natural causes in many ways and instances, by miracles of provi-

provi-

SERM. XVI. *Of the Excellency of the Christian Religion.* [179]

providence no less remarkable than those of nature, by internal attestations to the minds and consciences of men ; things too great slightly to be passed over, and the particular mention of which I must therefore now omit ; by such wonderful means, I say, hath God taken care to convince us, that our Religion came from him, which is a peculiar advantage that it hath, such as no other Institution (except that of the *Jews*, which was a prelude thereto, and whose truth serveth to confirm it) can reasonably pretend unto ; and a great perfection it is thereof, since as it is no small content to a traveller, by a direction which he can fully confide in, to know that he is in the right way to his journey's end ; so it cannot but prove an exceeding satisfaction and encouragement to us to be assured, by infallible testimony of God himself, that our Religion is the true and direct way unto eternal happiness.

These considerations may, I conceive, be sufficient, as to vindicate our Religion from all aspersions cast upon it either by inconsiderate and injudicious, or by vain and dissolute persons ; so to confirm us all in the esteem, and incite us to the practice thereof ; which use of them God in his mercy grant, through *Jesus Christ*. our Lord ; to whom for ever be all praise. *Amen.*

Now the God of Grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ 1 Pet. 4. 10.
Jesus — Make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you ; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. *Amen.*

Now our Lord *Jesus Christ* himself, and God even our Father, which hath loved 2 Thel. 2. 16.
us, and hath given us everlasting consolation, and good hope, through grace, comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work.

And in Jesus Christ, &c.

SERMON XVII.

THAT JESUS IS THE True MESSIAS.

ACTS IX. 22.

— Proving that this is the very Christ.

But Saul en-
creased the
more in
strength, and
confounded the
Jews, which
dwelt at Da-
mascus, pro-
ving that this
is the very
Christ. Euseb.
hist. 1. 3.
El. 7. 14.
Jer. 23. 6.
Ma. 9. 6. **A**S for the name of the *Messias*, there is evident reason, why it should not be openly expressed in the ancient predictions; it being an easy thing for any persons out of imposture, or wantonness to have assumed that name, and consequently it would not have suited so well the true person. It was therefore more expedient, that his name should rather only be covertly signified or intimated; it was sufficient that a name should be imposed on him well agreeing to his office and chief performances. There be indeed several names attributed to the *Messias*; They shall call his name *Emmanuel*. (said *Esay*.) This is his name, whereby he shall be called, The Lord our righteousness (*Jehovah tsidkenu*): And, His name shall be called *Wonderful, Counsellour, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace*, said *Esaïas* again; but it is apparent, that these were not intended to be so much his proper names, as attributes, or epithets congruous unto him in regard to the eminency of his person, and performances.

Zech. 6. 12.
3. 8.
Il. 4. 2. 11. 1.
Jer. 23. 5. 33.
15.
Matt. 2. 23. The Prophet *Zechary* seemeth also (insisting in the footsteps of *Esay* and *Jeremy*) to assign him the name *Netser* (or the Branch) Behold the man whose name is the Branch; but this only denoted an appellation suiting him, as derived from the stock of *David*, and might beside mystically allude to some circumstance concerning him. It doth not therefore appear, that the one proper name, by which the *Messias*, as the son of Man should be known and called, is directly forementioned; yet it is reasonable to suppose, that God would have an especial care, that he should have one befitting him. It was one of the seven things, which the *Talmudists* say were constituted before the world: the *Law, Repentance, Paradise, Hell, the Throne of glory,* the

the Sanctuary, the name of the Messias; according to that in the seventy second Psalm (verse 17.) *Ante solem primum nomen ejus*; so it seems they read it: the LXX have it, *πρὸ τοῦ ἡλίου διαμνεῖ τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ*.

It was anciently a method of divine providence to impose upon persons (destinated by God to be special subjects of his favour, and eminent ministers of his glory) names answerable to the nature of their employment, or to the design, which was by their means and ministry to be accomplished. Whereby as God's care and providence over humane affairs was declared, so men upon the mention of such names were admonished to consider the divine benefits, and the duties correspondent to them. The particular reason of imposing such names is sometime expressly set down; as in the cases of *Seth*, Gen. 4. 25. *Abraham*, *Israel*, *Solomon*; sometime it seems tacitly implied, the actions of *17. 32. 28.* the persons interpreting the reason of their names, as in *Melchisedeck*, *Joshua*, *1 Chr. 22. 9.* *Malachy*, and perhaps in many others. *Gen. 13. 18.* *Heb. 7. 1.*

This method with great reason we may suppose, that the same divine wisdom would use in assigning a name to that Person, whom from the beginning of things he had promised, and before the foundation of the world had designed to sanctify and send into the world, for achieving the most high, and excellent design, that ever for the glory of God and the good of his creation, was to be undertaken in this world. Most fit it would be, that God himself should be his God-father; that he should have no ordinary, no casual, no insignificant name; but such an one, which being heard might instruct and admonish us, might raise in us a sense of God's infinite mercy and bounty toward us; might breed love in our hearts, and impress veneration on our minds toward him, who should bear that auspicious and comfortable name; that name, which as the spouse of the mystical *Solomon* in her Cant. 1. 3. mystical song did sing is *as an ointment poured forth*, full of most wholesome, and most pleasant fragrancy.

Now since of all the *Messias* his performances none was to be more significant, than that of saving; to publish, to purchase, to effect salvation were to be (according to what Prophets expressly and frequently say) his peculiar works; to be the Saviour of the world was (as we before touched, according to the common opinion of the *Jews*) a proper attribute of his. *II. 25. 9. 35. 4. 49. 8. 26. 63. 1. 55. 5. 52. 7. 10. 61. 10. 59. 16. Hof. 1. 7. Zech. 9. 9. John 4. 42.*

Wherefore the name *Jesus* (which we are told in the Gospel was by direction from God imparted by particular revelation, brought by an Angel from heaven, imposed on our Lord) did very well suit the *Messias*. No other name could be more sweet, or acceptable; no other name could better become him, who was to redeem men from all their enemies, their flaveries, their errors, their sins, their miseries. *Matt. 1. 21. Luke 1. 32. 2. 21.*

It was indeed a name not in its immediate application altogether new, for many others had born it; *Jesus*, the son of *Justus* we have mentioned in St. Paul, *Jesus* the son of *Sirach*, that excellent writer we know; and divers others so named occur in *Josephus*; yet was it questionless by God's providence, or by *Moses*, by divine instinct, first produced with relation to the *Messias*; *Moses* called *Oshea* the son of *Nun* *Jehoshua*, saith the Text: being in a mysterious exchange from a former name assigned to the famous *Jesus* (as not only *Bensrach*, but the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews* write him) the son of *Nun*, who of all the ancient types did most exactly (in office and performance) represent and prefigure the *Messias*; being (as *Bensrach* speaks) *great for the saving of God's elect*; whose actions are wonderfully congruous to those, which we attribute to our *Jesus*. For, by the way to shew the resemblance (omitting less, and more nice congruities) as *Joshua* did bring the good report, and evangelized concerning the promised land (when other false or faint inquirers defamed it, and discouraged the people from entering) as he was educated under *Moses* and served him faithfully; as he succeeded in the administration and government of God's people, perfecting what *Moses* had begun of deliverance and settlement to them; As he brought the *Israelites* (not that old disbelieving, mutinous and repining generation, but a new progeny of better disposed people) finally out of the wilderness into *Canaan*, by God's miraculous assistance, subduing their Enemies, and establishing them in a quiet

• quiet possession of the promised land, allotting unto each Tribe its inheritance: and as he did re-circumcise the children of *Israel*: so did our heavenly *Jesus* first make a true and faithful discovery concerning the mystical land of promise (that better country) flowing with spiritual milk and honey (abundant with all spiritual comforts and pleasures, for the food, sustenance and refreshment of our souls.) He was born under the Law and submitted to its injunctions, fulfilling all righteousness. He survived it (the part of it, which was purely *Mosaic* and arbitrary) and did complete it. He doth conduct God's regenerate People (such as believe, and willingly follow him) out of the desert state of error, guilt and sin, into the superiour state of happy rest and joy, with miraculous power and efficacy; vanquishing all the spiritual *Amorites* (the *Devil, World* and *Flesh*) which infest; obstruct and oppose them; settling them in a perpetual undisturbed and immoveable enjoyment of that blissful region; having also by a spiritual circumcision prepared and consecrated them to God. Our Saviour therefore not only when he at last in fulness of truth did come into the world, but anciently in type and shadow may be supposed to have received this name *Jesus*, conferr'd upon him in the person of *Joshua*, his most illustrious representative. It certainly was most apposite to the *Messias*.

That *Jesus* (that Person, whose Birth, Life, Death, Resurrection and Ascension hence, are related in the Evangelical histories) is *the Christ*, is the principal Article of pure faith; the most peculiar doctrine of our Religion as such, and as distinct from all other Religions: it indeed virtually comprehends all other doctrines of moment therein, regarding either faith or practice. For that our being persuaded that *Jesus* is *the Christ*, implies, that we apprehend our selves obliged to embrace for truth whatever was taught by him and his Apostles, to obey all his laws, to rely upon him for attainment of all the mercies and blessings, and rewards, which he promised to dispence, in that order and upon those terms, which the Gospel declareth. Whence to the hearty belief of this Point such great commendations are given, so high rewards are offered, so excellent privileges are annexed in the Scriptures. Whence also the declaring, proving and persuading this doctrine was the chief matter of the Apostles preaching, as both their profession and practice do shew. *The Jews* (saith St. Paul to the *Corinthians*) *require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom, but we preach Christ, that was crucified. And, I determined* (saith he again of himself) *not to know any thing among you* (that is not to discover any other knowledge, not to insist on any other subject) *save Jesus Christ, even him that was crucified.* This St. *John* tells us was the drift of his writing the Gospel (which is a more extensive, and durable way of preaching) *These things* (saith he) *were written, that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ.* And their practice, suitable to such professions, is apparent in divers passages of this Book, wherein their acts, and their discourses are reported. This Text particularly represents the scope, to which St. *Paul* mainly directed his Preaching, which was the maintenance and persuasion of this Point, that *Jesus* is *the Christ*.

It is therefore very requisite, that we should well understand the meaning thereof, and that we should firmly be persuaded of its truth. To which purpose I shall endeavour, by God's assistance, to imitate St. *Paul's* practice here, who did *συνβιβάζειν* (that is the *Greek* word here, signifying primarily to put, or bring things together, and thence in a way of collection or argumentation to teach) who, I say, did instruct his auditours, collecting it from testimonies of ancient scripture, and confirming it by arguments grounded thereon. In performing which I shall observe this method.

1. I shall explain the notion and reason of this name, or title *Christ*.
2. I shall shew (that which is here tacitly supposed) that there was by God's appointment to be, or to come into the world from God one Person, signally that, which this name or title imports, *ὁ Χριστός*, the very *Christ*.
3. I shall argue that *Jesus* was that Person.
4. I shall explain in what manner, in what respects, to what purposes *Jesus* in the *New Testament* is represented as *Christ*.

5. I shall make some practical application of the Point.

1. For the first particular. *Christ* is a name, or title, importing office and dignity; being the same with *Messias*, that in *Greek*, this in *Hebrew* signifying the Anointed; the which appellation we find attributed to several persons upon the following ground: Of ancient times in the *Eastern Countries* (abounding as with good oyl, so with many delicate odoriferous spices) it seems generally to have been the manner (as from *Hazael* the *Syrian* his being anointed may probably be collected, it was however such among the *Jews*) to separate or consecrate persons (and things also I might add) designed to any great or extraordinary employment, by anointing them with ointments composed of those ingredients; they symbolizing, or denoting thereby (as it seems) both a plentiful effusion upon them of gifts and faculties qualifying them for such services; and also a comfortable and pleasant diffusion of good and grateful effects expected from them (from the use of things, the performances of persons thus sanctified) *Thy name*, saith the *Spouse* in the *Canticles*, is as an ointment poured forth; that is, thy name is very delightful, very acceptable. And, *Behold* (saith *David*, commending brotherly love and concord) *how good and pleasant a thing it is for brethren to dwell together in unity; it is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard*—so good and pleasant were those employments hoped to be, to which men were by such unction inaugurated. We find especially three sorts of Persons, to whom this consecration did, by divine appointment, belong; *Kings*, *Priests* and *Prophets*; persons by whose ministry God of old did manage his intercourse with men, in governing them and communicating his blessings to them, both in an ordinary way (so he used *Kings* and *Priests*) and in an extraordinary manner, therein he employed *Prophets*; which sorts of persons are therefore styled God's anointed; *Kings* and *Priests* more frequently, but sometimes also *Prophets*; as in that of the *Psalms*: *Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm*; where *Prophets* and the Anointed of God do seem to denote the same thing, and one to expound the other; however they belong to the same persons: for *Abraham*, whom together with the other *Patriarchs* those words concern, is expressly called a Prophet. (Now therefore, saith the Text, restore the man his wife, for he is a Prophet, and he shall pray for thee; and thou shalt live.) And that *Isaac* was a Prophet, the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews* intimates, saying, *By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come*. The same is plain of *Jacob*, who before his death uttered many great and remarkable predictions. The *Patriarchs* therefore probably as *Prophets* were styled God's Anointed. But to remark somewhat of these great offices, and their anointing singly:

For *Priests*, although at first all the Sons of *Aaron* were thus consecrated, according to that Law in *Exodus*, *Thou shalt anoint Aaron, and his sons, that they may minister unto me in the Priest's office*; yet the *Jewish* Masters tell us, that afterward in all the course of times only the High-priest was so consecrated. Whence by the anointed, or the Priest that is anointed, is, say they, meant the High-priest, in distinction from other inferior Priests.

For *Kings*, the *Jewish* Doctors also (as Master *Selden* reports) do tell us, that such of them, who in a legal, orderly, and unquestioned course of right did succeed unto the Kingdom, were not themselves in person anointed (they being conceived to derive a sufficient consecration from their Ancestours), but all those, who in an extraordinary way by special designation (as *Saul*, *David*, *Jehu*, *Hazael*) or upon a doubtful, and controverted, or opposed title (as *Solomon* and *Joas*) did assume the royal charge, were thus initiated. (How ancient also the custom of anointing Princes was, may be seen from that expression in *Jotham's* parable: *The trees went forth to anoint a King over them, and they said to the Olive-tree, Reign thou over us*.)

• As for *Prophets*, we do not find that they were commonly, or according to ordinary rule, anointed; but one plain instance we have of *Elisha*, substituted to *Elijah* (the chief of *Prophets* in his time) in this manner: *Elisha*, (it is said by God) *the son of Shaphat shalt thou anoint to be Prophet in thy room*; who was thus consecrated, probably, because he was to be a Prophet more than ordinary, endued with higher gifts, and designed to greater actions, than common

mon Prophets were then; or perhaps because he was to be the *Arch-prophet*, or head of the Prophets at that time.

We may also farther observe, that some persons, who (in probability) did not partake any material unction, but were yet destinated by God, and qualified and employed as special instruments of his providence or grace, for producing effects suitable to any of those offices, have been therefore styled *God's anointed*. Upon which score the *Patriarchs* (by whom God's true Religion was maintained and conveyed) do seem to have been called God's Anointed. And King *Cyrus* (whose ministry God used in the re-edifying his Temple, and refreshing his People) is therefore termed God's *Christ*, or *Anointed* (*Thus saith the Lord to his Anointed, to Cyrus my Christ; τῷ Χριστῷ μου Κύρῳ*) the name of the sign being imparted to persons, who were endued with the qualities, or did perform the effects signified thereby.

These things being considered, it appeareth that the name *Christ* doth import a Person in a special and signal manner designed and ordained by God to one, or some, or all of these charges and functions; an extraordinary *King*, or a great *Priest*, or an eminent *Prophet*; or one, in whom either more, or all of these did concur; so much may suffice for the notion and reason of this title, *Christ*.

II. Now that there was a person supereminently endued with all these characters (a *Christ* in all these respects) decreed by God in due time to come into the world for accomplishment of the greatest purposes answerable to that Title (for the instruction and reformation of the world, for the erecting and managing an universal and perpetual Kingdom, for the reconciliation and benediction of mankind, for the reduction of all Nations to the acknowledgment of God, and obedience to his will, and hope in his mercy) many express passages in the ancient Scripture declare.

Deut. 18. 15, 18. That such a Prophet should be sent, *Moses* in express terms foretold: *The Lord thy God* (saith he) *shall raise up unto thee a prophet from the midst of thee of thy brethren, like unto me, unto him shall ye hearken.* And, *I will* (saith God himself) *raise them up a prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee: And I will put my words into his mouth, and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him, &c.* Which words plainly describe a very extraordinary Prophet sometime to come, who was (signally and especially, beyond all other Prophets) to resemble *Moses*, who consequently was to accomplish high designs, and to achieve wonderful acts; to conduct and deliver God's people, to reveal God's mind and will, to promulge a new Law, and establish a new Covenant; so his resembling *Moses* doth imply, so his mission doth signify (for why, if he were not intended for the performance of somewhat great and new, even beyond what *Moses* did, should he be designed so formally; what need or reason had there been of his mission, after *Moses*?) and so the later Prophets do interpret the great Law-giver his words: Who largely predict concerning one, ordained by God to come; who should eminently discharge all parts of the prophetic function; who should disclose new truths to men, should proclaim a new law to the world, should establish a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with all people; who should propagate the knowledge and worship of God, enlightning the Gentiles, and converting them unto God; who should instruct the ignorant, strengthen the faint, comfort the afflicted; according to divers passages concerning him: As for instance, *that* in *Esay*, cited by St. Luke: *The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken hearted*—and *that* in the same Prophet, alledged by St. Matthew: *Behold my servant, whom I uphold, mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth. I have put my spirit upon him; he shall bring forth judgment unto the Gentiles, he shall not cry, &c.* which being anointed to preach tidings, and to bring forth judgment from God; being elected and inspired by God in order to such performances, are peculiar marks of a Prophet; such promulgation of God's will, such ministration of direction and comfort from God are the proper employment of a Prophet, that is, of an especial Agent sent and qualified by God to transact spiritual affairs with men, and to declare or denounce his pleasure to them.

ancient Scriptures do also plainly signify concerning the same person, that
 be a great *Prince* constituted by God to govern his people for ever in Acts 2. 36.
 peace and prosperity; endued with power requisite for delivering Luke 1. 71,
 them from oppression and slavery, for subduing their enemies, for reducing the
 nations under subjection unto God. So *Esay*: For unto us a child is born, unto us a
 son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulders—Of the increase of
 his government and peace there shall be no end; upon the throne of David, and upon
 his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it, with judgment and with justice for ever.
Jeremy: Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righ- Jer. 23. 5.
 teous branch, and a King shall reign, and prosper, and shall execute judgment and 33. 15. 30. 8.
 justice in the earth: in his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely.
Ezekiel: I will save my flock, they shall be no more a prey— and I will set up Ezek. 34. 22,
 one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them—they shall also walk in my sta- 36. 21, &c.
 tutes, and observe my statutes, and do them. *Daniel*: I saw in the night visions, and 37. 21, &c.
 behold one like the son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the ancient Dan. 7. 13.
 of days—And there was given him dominion and glory, and a kingdom, that all peo- 7. 18. 2. 44,
 ple, and nations, and languages shall serve him: His dominion is an everlasting domi- 45.
 nion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.
Hosea: The children of Israel shall return, and seek the Lord their God, and David Hof. 3. 5.
 their King; and shall fear the Lord, and his goodness, in the latter days. The *Psal-*
mist: I have set my King upon my holy hill of Sion; ask of me, and I will give thee Psal. 2. 6, 8.
 the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. In these and in many other places 72. 11, 17.
 do the Prophets speak (very perspicuously and magnificently) concerning the 45. 6. 89. 3.
 Kingdom, Royal state, and Princely achievements of this great Personage who 27. 36. 132.
 should come. 17, 18.

That he also should assume and execute the *Priestly* function, may also be learn-
 ed from prophetic instruction. For of him *Zechary* thus spake: Behold the man Zech. 6. 12.
 whose name is the Branch; (a name, which so often (in sense) is attributed to this *Δυστολι*
 Person, as sprouting from the stock of David) he shall grow up out of his place, and *Παύς*
 he shall build the temple of the Lord; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit, and rule
 upon his throne; and he shall be a Priest upon his throne; and the counsel of the Lord
 shall be between them both. Of him also David spake: The Lord hath sworn and Psal. 110. 4.
 will not repent; thou art a Priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek. To
 make reconciliation for iniquity (which Daniel ascribes to him) to bear the sins of Dan. 9. 24.
 the people, and to make intercession for the transgressors (which are assigned to Isa. 53. 12.
 him by *Esay*) are also performances, from which his sacerdotal office may be
 collected.

These things being considered, it is no wonder, that the ancient Jews (although
 the Text of Scripture doth seldom, perhaps not oftner than once (in the ninth of Psal. 45. 7.
Daniel) explicitly and directly apply this name of *Christ*, or *Messias*, to this illu- Isa. 61. 1.
 strious Person, so prophesied of, and promised to come) did especially assign this
 title unto him; it seeming of any most congruous, and most comprehensive of
 what appertained to him; most apt to denote all the prerogatives, the endow-
 ments, the achievements, the effects which should belong to him, or proceed
 from him. Whence 'tis observed by the learned, that the *Chaldee* Paraphrase
 (composed, as they say, before Jesus our Lord his time, by the Priests, as an in-
 terpretation of the not so exactly understood *Hebrew* Scripture, for edification and
 instruction of the people) doth very often apply unto him this name of the *Messias*:
 according to whose exposition and style, together with tradition continually deduc-
 ed down from the Prophets themselves (as is probable) we see plainly from the
 New Testament, and from other History conspiring therewith, that God's people
 unanimously did expect a Person under this name and notion, who should be en-
 dued with qualities, and should perform actions conformable to the characters
 mentioned, to come in determinate time into the world. Of *Anna* the Prophe-
 tress it is said, that she gave thanks likewise to the Lord, and spake of him *ἡγομένης* Luke 2. 38.
παρακαλῶντος *ἀντιπροσώπου*, to all that expected redemption in Jerusalem. Hence when
 St. John the Baptist did live, and teach in a manner extraordinary, the people did Luke 3. 15.
 expect, and all men mused in their hearts concerning him, whether he were the *Christ*:
 Yea the Jews (that is their Senate, or great Synedrium) sent Priests and Levites to John 1. 19.
 inquire of him, whether he were the *Christ* or no: And when Jesus his admir- 7. 31.
 courses and works had convinced divers persons, they said, When *Christ* comes, 7. 31.

- do greater miracles than this man hath done?* And the report which Philip made to Nathanael concerning Jesus, was this: *We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets did write; so at large did they presume concerning a Christ to come.* That they particularly did conceive he should be a great Prophet, who should abundantly declare God's truth and will, may be gathered from divers passages; as from that in St. John: *Men therefore seeing the miracle that Jesus had done, said, That this is in truth the prophet, who was to come into the world.* Thus may that in St. Luke be taken: *And there came a fear upon all, and they glorified God, saying; that the great prophet is risen up among us, and that God hath visited his people;* and this the Samaritan woman implied, when she said, *I know that the Messias comes, and when he shall come he will tell us all things.* That they supposed he should be a King, who should be furnished with mighty power, and should perform wonderful acts; who should assume the government of God's people with royal majesty, and execute it with glorious success, is most clear. It was no wonder to King Herod to hear the Wise-mens inquiry, *Where is he that is born King of the Jews?* upon it he immediately demands of the Scribes *where Christ is to be born.* Hence no sooner did Nathanael believe in Christ, but he cries out, *Master, Thou art the Son of God, thou art the King of Israel.* It was upon this supposition that the Priests grounded their calumny: *We have found this man perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Caesar, saying that he himself is Christ, the King;* as also hence (upon information and by instinct from them) Pilate asked him that question, *Art thou the King of the Jews?* Hence likewise proceeded that Acclamation: *Εὐλογμὲν ὁ ἐρχόμενος βασιλεὺς, Blessed is the King, that is to come in the name of the Lord.* And it was from this ancient popular prejudice, that the Apostles asked Jesus after his resurrection, *Lord wilt thou at this time restore the Kingdom to Israel?* It is indeed the ordinary Title, which the Talmudists and ancient Rabbins give the Messias, *Hammelech Messiah, Messias the King.*
- That the Messias in their opinion was also to be a Priest, is not so clearly apparent; yet it may probably be inferred: That they understood the 110th Psalm to respect the Messias, is very likely, or rather certain, from that passage in the Gospel, in which Jesus asked the Pharisees, *What think ye of Christ, whose son is he?* and, they answering, *the Son of David,* he returned upon them this puzzling question: *How then doth David in the Spirit (that is prophetically) call him Lord, saying, The Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou on my right hand;* which question confounded them, they not daring to deny that Psalm to respect the Messias (it being the received opinion among the Doctors) nor yet seeing how the Relations of Son and Lord were reconcilable: And admitting that Psalm was to be referr'd unto the Messias, they must consequently acknowledge him to be a Priest; for it is there said, *The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a Priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.* It was also an opinion passing among them, that the Messias should be the Saviour of the World, as may be collected from that saying of the Samaritans: *We have heard him our selves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world:* Which being their opinion, and toward the salvation of Men it being needful, that a reconciliation of them unto God, and an expiation of their sins (which are Sacerdotal acts) should be procured by him, it seems to follow, that they had some notion of his Priesthood. Indeed the persuasion concerning a Messias to come, about the time when our Lord appeared, became diffused over the whole Eastern parts; as even Pagan Historians (Tacitus and Suetonius) do report. And the conceit thereof was so vigorous in the Jews, that it excited them to rebellion, and encouraged them with great obstinacy to persist therein, as not only those Historians, but Josephus himself telleth us; he also together with them (which is somewhat strange) referring the intent of those Prophecies, and the verifying of that opinion to the person of the Emperour Vespasian. The same conceit did then likewise occasion many Pretenders and Impostours (such as Theudas, and Judas the Galilaean) to arise, disposing also the

Percrebuerat oriente toto vetus et constans opinio esse in fatis, ut eo tempore Judæa profecti rerum potirentur. Suet. in Vesp.

Pluribus persuasio inerat antiquis sacerdotum literis contineri, eo ipso tempore fore, ut valesceret Oriens, profectique Judæa rerum potirentur. Tacitus Hist. V.

Τὸ δ' ἐπ' αὐτὸς μάλιστα πρὸς τὸ πόλεμον τῷ Χριστῷ ἀμφοτέρω ὁμοίως ἐν τοῖς ἱεροῖς ἀριθμῶν γεγραμμένον, ὡς καὶ τὸ καὶ ἐν ἐκείνῳ ἀπὸ τῆς χάριτος τῆς αὐτῆς ἀρξῆς τὸ οὐκ ἀποκρίναι. — ἐδὴ καὶ ἅμα τὴν περὶ Οὐεσπασιανῆς τὸ λόγιον ἠγνοοῦσαν, ἀποδείχθη δὲ ἐπὶ Ἰουδαίας αὐτοκρατορίας. Jos. ἀλώσ. 6. 31.

People so easily to be deluded by them, and so readily to run after them, as they did to their own harm.

Thus

Thus according to the ancient Scriptures, interpreted, and backed by the current Tradition, and general consent of God's People, it is sufficiently apparent, that a *Messias* (according to the notion premised) was to come into the world.

III. Now farther, that *Jesus*, whom we acknowledge, was indeed that *Messias*, may appear plainly from the perfect correspondency of all circumstances belonging to the *Messias* his appearance, and of all characters futing his Person, and of all things to be performed by him; together with whatever was to be consequent upon his presence and performances; according to ancient presignifications and predictions, and according to the passable opinions of God's people concerning him; the which (as they cannot possibly fute with any other person, that hath yet appeared, or may reasonably be expected to come hereafter, so) they exactly agree to the coming, and person, and practice, and success of *Jesus*.

Among circumstances the most considerable is the time; the which (both when it was said that he should come, and when it was fit that he should come) did very well agree to *Jesus*. But when the Fulness of time was come, God sent forth his *son*, &c. Fulness in regard to ancient prediction, in regard to fitness of season. Gal. 4. 14. Eph. 1. 10. Acts 14. 16. — 17. 30. For as the *Messias* was to be the desire of all Nations, so *Jesus* did come then, when by special Instinct a general expectation and desire of his coming was raised in the world; at the time, when the Patriarch *Jacob* foretold that *Shiloh* would come, Gen. 49. 10. viz. when the sceptre was just departed from *Judah*, and a Law-giver from his feet; *Judea* being brought under the dominion of strangers (such were the Romans, such was King *Herod*.) About the expiration of *Daniel's* weeks (however commenced, or computed) the time determined to finish transgression, and to make an end of sins, Dan. 9. 24. to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to introduce everlasting righteousness; to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most holy (as the Prophet speaks.) Shortly before the destruction of *Hierusalem*, according to that of *Daniel*: And Dan. 9. 26. after sixty and two weeks shall *Messias* be cut off, but not for himself; and the people of the Prince that shall come shall destroy the city, and the sanctuary. When that *Sion*, out of which (as *Esay* tells us) the law was to go forth, and out of which the Redeemer should come, and turn ungodliness from *Jacob*, did stand and flourish. When the Temple did stand, which the Prophets *Malachi* and *Haggai* did predict should be illustrated with the presence of the *Messiah*: The Lord, whom ye seek, saith *Malachi*, shall suddenly come to his Temple; even the messenger of the Covenant in whom ye delight: and, I will (saith *Haggai*) shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come; and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord; the glory of this latter house shall be greater than the glory of the former, saith the Lord of hosts. Before *Jeremy* was desolated, *Jerusalem* destroyed, the Tribes and Families of *Israel* confounded, all that People woefully dispersed, and in a palpable manner deserted by God: When the Jewish Religion (which the *Messias* was to complete) was by a numerous accession of *Proselytes* disseminated, and diffused through many Provinces of that one vast Empire, under which a great part of the world was united and settled durably in a calm state of peace and order: when one or two Languages were commonly understood by all, and men thereby more easily conversed together; and when the ancient Scriptures being translated into *Greek* were so widely intelligible. When mankind was become generally civilized and cultivated with laws, and policy, and learning; with knowledge of Arts and Philosophy; the world then beginning of it self to open its eyes, so as to discern the errors and deceits, by which it long had been abused; and was thence well prepared to learn, and rendred very susceptible of divine truth; when all things thus conspired with good advantage to entertain the *Christ*, then in the fulness of time, in the right and proper season (*καὶ ποὺς ἰδὼς*, as *St. Paul* speaketh) *καὶ ποὺς δεῦρα*, in an acceptable time, as *Esay* prophesied, did *Jesus* come, to instruct and reform the world, as he professed. It was *Porphyry's* objection against *Christianity*, and an obvious one, why *Christ* did not come before, but in the latter days; to which the particular fitness of this time is an answer. Gal. 4. 4. Eph. 1. 10. 1 Tim. 2. 6. Isa. 49. 8. 2 Cor. 6. 2.

The other circumstances; the Family out of which, the place where, the manner in which *Jesus* was born, did also punctually correspond. He was to be an *Israelite*, according to the promise made of old to *Abraham*, that in his Seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed; and according to *Moses* his Prophecy: The Lord thy God shall raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee of thy brethren.

Gen. 49. 7. &c. He was to come out of the Tribe of *Judah*; as the Patriarch *Jacob* in his last prophetic rapture did by various expressions intimate and signifie. Particularly he was to rise out of the Family of *David*, as the Prophets frequently and clearly did avouch; for he was (as *Esay* said) *to be a rod out of the stem of Jesse; and a branch going out of his roots; a righteous branch* (according to *Jeremy*) *whom God would raise to David*. He whom *Solomon* (that most wise, peaceable and prosperous Prince, who raised that glorious Temple, the emblem of God's Church) did prefignie; and in whom the promises made to *David*, concerning the perpetuity of his throne should be made good; *There shall not fail thee a man, &c.*—*Thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee; thy throne shall be established for ever*; especially that absolute and irrevocable promise ratified by God's oath: *I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David; my servant, Thy seed will I establish for ever, and build up thy throne unto all generations*: who consequently by reason of conjunction in blood, and mutual representation, *David* prefiguring him, and he by succession into the imperial right expressing *David*, is by several of the Prophets (by *Jeremy*, by *Ezekiel*, by *Hoshea*) called *David*, whence the learned among the *Jews* did consent, that the *Messias* was to be the Son of *David*: *How say the Scribes that Christ is the Son of David?* and, *What think ye of Christ, whose Son is he?* ('tis our Lord's question to the *Pharisees*) *they say unto him, The Son of David*. Yea the people were generally informed herein, and possessed with this sentiment: *Hath not the Scripture said, that Christ cometh of the seed of David?* was a popular speech in *St. John*. And all the people were amazed, and said, *is not this the Son of David?* Now accordingly that *Jesus* came out of this Country; Tribe and Family (that he was, as *St. Luke* speaketh, *of the house and lineage of David*, both according to natural and legal succession) the express affirmation of Angels, the positive attestation of his Parents and Kindred (who best knew,) the genealogies (according to the manner of those times, and that Nation) carefully preserved, and produced by the *Evangelists*, do assure us; neither doth it appear that *Jesus* his Adversaries did ever contest this point, but seem by their silence to have granted it, as easily and evidently proveable by authentick records and testimonies.

More precisely yet for the place of the *Messias* his birth, it was to be the Town of *Bethlehem*; so the Prophet *Micah* foretold; thus cited by *St. Matthew*: *Thou Bethlehem in the land of Judah, art not the least among the Princes of Judah; for out of thee shall come a Governour, that shall rule my people Israel*. So from hence did the learned judge; for being consulted by King *Herod*, where *Christ* was to be born, they answered *that in Bethlehem*; and so also did the people commonly believe, as appears by the foresaid passage in *St. John*: *Hath not the Scripture said, that Christ cometh of the seed of David, and out of the Town of Bethlehem, where David was?* Now that *Jesus* should be there born God himself took especial care, ordering it by his providence, that by imperial edict the world should be taxed, or registred; and that in order thereto the Parents of *Jesus* should be forced to go from a distant place of their habitation unto *Bethlehem*, the place of their stock and family; that so both *Jesus* might be born there, and that good circumstance might appear certain by the unquestionable testimony of the *Censual Tables*, unto which (extant even in their times) *Justin Martyr*, *Tertullian* and *St. Chrysostome* refer those, who would be certified in that particular.

Καὶ οὗτος ὁ ἄνθρωπος ἐστὶν ἐκ τῆς φυλῆς Ἰουδαίων
καθὼς καὶ Ἰεροσολύμων, ἐν ᾗ ἐγεννήθη
Ἰσὼς Χριστός, ὡς καὶ μαρτυρεῖται ἐν
τῇ ἀναγραφῇ, &c. *Just. Martyr. 4-
pol. 2. Tertull. in Marc. 4. 19.*

That place also of his Parents abode in *Nazareth* of *Galilee*, upon which was consequent his first appearance in way of action, was so ordered; as to answer ancient predictions; according to which it was said, that *in the land of Zebulun and Nephthali, by the way of the Sea beyond Jordan in Galilee of the nations, the people that walked in darkness did see a great light, and they that dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, upon them the light shined*.

The manner also of the *Messias* his birth, was as became such a Person, to be very extraordinary, and different from the common generation of men: for he was not only to be *One like the son of man* (as the Prophet *Daniel* terms him) and indeed *the Son of David*, as all the Prophecies declare of him, but the *Son of God* also: for, *Thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee* saith God of him in the second *Psalms*. And that which in the first less perfect sense was said of *Solomon*

lomon (who prefigured him) was according to a more sublime meaning, and more exactly to agree unto him: *He shall be my son, and I will be his father; and I will establish the throne of his kingdom over Israel for ever: Also I will make him my first-born higher than the kings of the earth:* And accordingly we see, that the Jews (both the wiser, and the vulgar sort) did suppose that he should be the Son of God: So St. John the Baptist, so Nathanael, so Martha, so St. Peter, and the other Apostles, when they became persuaded that Jesus was the Christ, did presently, according to anticipation of judgment common to them with the people, confess him to be the son of God; the High-priest himself intimated the same, when he asked Jesus, *Art thou the Christ, the son of the blessed?* Yea, the Devils themselves were learned and orthodox in this point; who cried out, *Thou art the Christ, the son of God.* Now that, according to those Prophecies and those Traditions, the Messias should be in a more than ordinary way, and (for the justifying of God's truth together with the satisfying men) should evidently appear to be the son of God, it was requisite (at least convenient) that his birth should be procured by divine operation, without concurrence of a humane father (how otherwise, at least how better, could it be apparent that he was both the son of God, and of man?) It was consequently either necessary, or fit that he should be born of a Virgin: And that he should indeed be so born; the Prophet *Esay* did signify, when he said, *The Lord himself shall give you a sign; that is, shall perform somewhat very remarkable and strange: what was that? Behold a Virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Emanuel;* which Prophecy that it belonged to the Messias appears from the report and description, which follows in the continuation of this particular Prophecy concerning this child: *For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulders, and his name shall be called wonderful, &c.* which description questionless appertaineth to the Messias. The same Prophet signifies the same concerning him, when he introduceth him speaking thus: *And now, saith the Lord, that formed me from the womb to be his servant, &c.* Now that Jesus in correspondence to this admirable character was born of a Virgin, his Parents (persons of unblameable integrity and innocence; so that even the adversaries of Jesus appear not ever to have offered to impeach them of imposture, or to have troubled them about this report coming from them) did constantly aver, Angels did attest to their report, and God himself at several times by audible voices from heaven declared Jesus to be his beloved son.

The state and condition also, in which the Messias was first to appear, was described to be a state of external meanness and obscurity, of poverty and wretchedness in the eye of man: A state indeed most convenient and proper for a spiritual King, a most holy Priest; and absolute Prophet; who was to teach, exercise and exemplify the most rough and harsh pieces of righteousness and piety (contempt of worldly vanities and pleasures; all sorts of self-denial, and abstinence; the virtues of meekness, humility and patience) who was to manage and execute his great undertakings not by natural or humane force, but by a virtue supernatural and divine; whose power consequently would be more conspicuous in a state of visible meanness and impotency, than in a condition of worldly splendour and strength; that also which he was to merit from God, and to undergo for the sake of men doth argue the same: that such the Messias his state was to be, there are divers mystical intimations in the ancient Scripture; but the Prophet *Esay* speaks it out most plainly: *He shall grow up (says he, describing that state) before the Lord like a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground; He hath no form or comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him.* And again: *Thus saith the Lord, the redeemer of Israel, and his holy one; To him whom man despiseth, to him whom the nation abhorreth, to a servant of Rulers, Kings shall see and arise, Princes also shall worship.*

Now that Jesus appeared thus in a poor, servile and despicable condition, we need not for to prove; for as his Followers avow it, so his Adversaries are most ready to grant it, in the haughtiness of their conceit taking it for an advantage against him, it proves a scandal to them. *Is not this the Carpenter's son? Is not this the Carpenter the son of Mary? said they, and they were offended at him.* Hence was

it,

— Εἰ μὲν σημεῖον ὅτι τὸ διδόμενον, παρὰ δὲ οὐκ ἔστι καὶ ἡ γέννησις. εἰ δὲ καὶ οὗτος ὁ τρεῖς ὁ γέννησας τὸ παιδίον, μήτε σημεῖον λεγέσθω. Bal. in Isa. 7.

Isa. 7. 14.
Matt. 1. 12.

Isa. 9. 6.

Isa. 49. 5.

Isa. 53. 3.

Isa. 49. 7.

Phil. 2. 7.
2 Cor. 8. 9.

Matt. 13. 55.

Mark 6. 3.

Ita. 53. 3. It, that as the Prophet foretold, *He was despised and rejected of men, and they esteemed him not.* Thus all the circumstances of the *Messias* his coming were answered by those of *Jesus*.

Now concerning the qualities and endowments of the *Messias*, which constitute his personal character, they are, as was expedient, such as should dispose and fit him for the discharge of his great employment and duty with utmost advantage, and especial decency; in general, he was to be endowed with supereminent piety and sanctity, with perfect innocence and integrity; so it is implied in all the descriptions of his person, and performances: *The sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre; thou lovest righteousness and hatest iniquity, wherefore God even thy God hath anointed thee with the oyl of gladness above thy fellows,* said the Psalmist of him; and *Righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins,* said *Esay* of him; (denoting the ready disposition of his mind to do what ever was good :) and, *He had done no violence, neither was there any deceit in his lips,* saith the same Prophet of him again. Some particular virtues and abilities are also ascribed to him in an eminent degree: Excellent wisdom and knowledge in spiritual matters thus represented by *Esay*: *The spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom, and understanding; the spirit of counsel, and might; the spirit of knowledge, and fear of the Lord; and shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord.* Eloquence also, skill and aptitude to instruct men; which that most Evangelical Prophet thus sets forth; *The Lord hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary* —. That he should be meek, and gentle, and compassionate toward men, in regard to their infirmities and afflictions; mild, and lowly in his conversation, the Prophets also signify: *He shall (saith Esay) feed his flock like a shepherd, he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom; and shall gently lead those that are with young. A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench:* and, *Behold,* saith *Zachary*, *thy King cometh unto thee, he is just and having salvation, lowly, and riding upon an ass.* That he should be of a quiet and peaceable disposition, no-wise fierce or contentious, turbulent or clamorous, *Esay* declares, thus saying of him (as *St. Matthew* cites him :) *He shall not strive, nor cry, neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets.* To his admirable patience in bearing afflictions and contumelies, *Esay* thus renders express testimony; *He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; he was brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth.* And, *I gave my back to the smiter, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair, I hid not my face from shame, and spitting.* His invincible courage and resolution in God's service, together with his strong confidence in God, and entire submission to God's will, is thus described by the same Prophet: *The Lord God (saith he) will help me, therefore I shall not be confounded, therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed.* — *The Lord God hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back.* His general goodness and boundless charity toward men, the nature of his office and design, together with the whole course and tenour of his practice, such as they are represented, do suppose and imply.

Now that *Jesus* (our Lord) did in his person fully correspond, and did by his practice thoroughly make good this moral high character; the story of his life with admirable simplicity and sincerity, without any semblance of disguise or artifice, represented by persons, who most intimately were acquainted and long conversed with him (or by persons immediately informed by them) and with greatest constancy attested to and maintained by them, doth plainly shew; wherein his incomparable piety toward God, his readiness to fulfil all righteousness, his entire submission and resignation of himself to God's will, the continual fervency (devotion of all kinds, prayer, thanksgiving, fasting, practised in the most intense degree, and in the most reverent manner) his pure and ardent zeal for God's glory, his steadfast resolution, and indefatigable industry in God's service (making it his meat to do the will of him that sent him, and to perform his work.)

Wherein an unspotted innocence, not only exempted from the vices and defilements, but raised above the vanities and impertinences of the world; secured by

a magnanimous contempt, or * neglect and abstinence from all worldly grandeur and splendour; all secular wealth and profit, all bodily delight and ease, wherein an admirable wisdom and prudence, expressed in all his demeanour, and his discourse; in his discerning the secret thoughts and dissembled intentions of men; in his declaring and defending truth, detecting and confuting errors; in baffling learned and wily opposers; in eluding captious questions, and evading treacherous designs; in not meddling with the secular affairs and interests of men; in not encumbering himself with the needless cares and occupations of this life, nor entangling himself in the snares of this world; in dexterously accommodating his behaviour and his speech to the dispositions, the capacities, the needs of men; to the circumstances of things, and exigencies of occasion, so as did best conduce to the promoting his great design and undertaking; so that the people, observing his proceedings, could not but be astonished, and ask, † *Whence hath this man this wisdom?* so that they could not but acknowledge, *He hath done all things well.*

Wherein particularly an excellent faculty of speaking and teaching, of interpreting and applying the Holy Scriptures, of proving and persuading God's truth, whereby he drew the people after him, converted many of them to amendment of life, convinced the most averse and incredulous; so that *all that heard him were amazed at his understanding, and answers*; so that *all bare witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth*; so that the Officers sent to apprehend him did confess, *Never man spake like this man.*

Wherein an invincible fortitude and gallantry, expressed in his most constant profession and undaunted maintenance of truth and goodness; in his encountering the prejudices, detecting the frauds, reproving the vices of the Age, though upheld by the greatest persons and by prevalent Factions; in his plain dealing and free speaking with all sincerity and all authority, in his zealous checking and chastising profane abuses; in his disregarding the rash and fond opinions of men, their spiteful obloquies, harsh censures, slanderous imputations, and unjust reproaches; in his foreseeing the greatest of dangers, and worst of mischiefs that could arrive to man, yet cheerfully encountering and firmly sustaining them; sustaining all the violent oppositions and assaults which the most virulent malice and envy enflamed with superstition and blind zeal could set against him.

Wherein a most quiet and peaceable disposition, apparent from his never attempting any resistance, or any revenge upon provocation of frequent great affronts and injuries; from his never raising any tumults, nor fomenting any quarrels, nor meddling with any litigious matters, nor encroaching upon any man's right or office; by his ready compliance with received customs, by his paying tribute, although not due from him, to prevent offence; by his frequent instructions and exhortations to peace, to innocence, to patience, to due obedience, to performing due respect to superiours, and paying customs to governours; to the yielding a docile ear, and an observance to those who *sate in Moses his chair.*

Wherein an exceeding meekness and gentleness, demonstrated in all his conversation; in resenting very moderately, or rather not resenting at all most unjust hatreds, outrageous calumnies, bitter reproaches and contumelies from his adversaries; very perverse neglects and ingratitude from multitudes of people; many infirmities, stupidities, distrusts, basenesses and treacheries from his own nearest friends and followers. In his passing over and easily pardoning the greatest offences committed against him, yea sometime extenuating and excusing them. In the mildness of his censures, expostulations and reproofs; in his tempering the fierce zeal, hard censure, and rigorous proceeding against persons unhappy, or faulty; in his tender pity of all persons in any want, distress or trouble; in his earnest commiseration and bemoaning the vengeance he foresaw impendent on his persecutors, and in his praying for their pardon.

Wherein a marvellous humility and lowliness of mind expressed by his not seeking * honour or applause from men; but shunning and rejecting it; his not ascribing to himself, but ascribing all to God, and referring all to his glory; by his making no ostentation of his miraculous power and high endowments, but, so far as would comport with the prosecution of his main purpose (the glory and service of God, the good and welfare of men) carefully suppressing and concealing them; in his, without dissatisfaction or discouragement, bearing scorn, and contempt, and obloquy;

* Matt. 8. 20.
2 Cor. 8. 9.
Luke 2. 40, 52.
Matt. 9. 4, 12.
10. 25. 22. 18.
16. 1. 19. 3.
22. 18. 35. 46.
John 8. 6.
Matt. 21. 27.
22. 18. 34.
John 6. 1. 8. 6.
10. 39.
Luke 20. 3. 22.
4. 30. 12. 22.
Matt. 12. 14.
Matt. 19. 5.
Mark 8. 30.
Luke 12. 14.
13. 2. 14. 7.
12. 18. 17.
19. 11.
John 7. 6. 16.
4. 12. 11. 54.
16. 27. 4. 10.
† Mat. 13. 54.
Mark 7. 37.
John 12. 42.
7. 15. 7. 46.
Matt. 7. 28.
Luke 2. 47.
4. 42.
John 8. 40. 7.
25. 26. 7.
Luke 20. 46.
13. 52. 16. 15.
Matt. 12. 14.
15. 13. 23. 19.
15. 6. 14. 8. 24.
Luke 19. 45.
John 2. 15.
Luke 9. 22, 51.
18. 32. 22. 15.
Matt. 16. 21.
20. 17.
Mark 10. 33.
Matt. 26. 52.
Luke 12. 14.
Matt. 8. 4.
Luke 17. 14.
Matt. 17. 27.
Matt. 9. 23.
—10. 16.
Matt. 22. 21.
Matt. 23. 2.
Matt. 11. 39.
Matt. 9. 4, 34.
12. 25. 10. 25.
12. 24.
John 15. 19.
10. 32.
Luke 4. 24.
Matt. 26. 50.
12. 25. 14. 31.
John 7. 12.
7. 20. 8. 48.
10. 20.
Matt. 17. 17.
26. 56.
Luke 22. 46.
23. 34. 22. 51.
Luke 9. 55.
John 8. 7.
Matt. 9. 36.
14. 14. 15. 32.
Luke 7. 13.
Luke 9. 41.
13. 34.
John 13. 21.
Luke 23. 34.
* John 5. 41.
8. 53. 54. 6.
15. 8. 28. 11.
4. 17. 4.

Luk. 7. 16, 29. obloquy; in his willing condescension to the meanest offices and employments;
 9. 43. 8. 56. in his free and familiar conversation with all sorts of people, with the lowest and
 8. 39. 17. 18. most despicable, with the worst and most odious, for their good; he not despi-
 18. 43. sing the poorest or vilest wretch, who seemed capable of receiving any benefit
 Mat. 8. 4. 9. 30. from him; in his easiness to be entreated, and readiness to comply with the de-
 12. 16. 19. 17. sires of any man imploring succour or relief from him; in his being ready not
 Mark 5. 43. only to oblige, but to be obliged and receive courtesies from any man; to an-
 8. 23. swer the invitation of a *Pharisee*, or of a *Publican*; to accept favourably the well
 Matt. 9. 24. intended respect of a poor woman; in the softness and sweetness of his language
 John 13. 4. to all men, particularly to his disciples; (*Be of good courage Daughter; Son be of*
 Matt. 9. 10. *good cheer; I say unto you my friends; little children, I am a little while with you;*
 8. 3. 19. *such was his style, and conversation toward his inferiours.*)
 Luke 5. 29. Wherein an unparallell'd patience in contentedly and chearfully, through all
 15. 2. 19. 5. the course of his life, undertaking and undergoing whatever by God's will and
 7. 36. 11. 37 providence was imposed on him, how grievous and distastful soever to humane
 John 12. 7. apprehension or sense; the extreme penury, the hardest toil, the vilest disgra-
 Matt. 26. 10. ces, the most bitter pains and anguishes incident to body or mind, the most hor-
 Matt. 9. 2, 22. rid and most sorrowful of deaths, all these aggravated by the conscience of his
 Luke 12. 4. own clearest innocence, by the extreme ingratitude of those who misused him,
 John 15. 14. by the sense of God's displeasure for the sin of man, by all the embittering con-
 13. 33. siderations which a most lively piety and tender charity suggested; in submitting
 John 18. 11. to all this most freely and most calmly, without any regret, any disturbance.
 12. 27: Eph. 3. 19. Wherein an unexpressible and unconceivable charity (*a charity indeed which*
 Matt. 26. 39. *surpasseth knowledge*, as St. *Paul* speaketh) evidenced in the constant strain and
 Matt. 8. 20. tenour of his life, passing through all his designs, all his words, and all his a-
 (2 Cor. 8. 9.) ctions; for *διηλθεν ἐνεργετῶν* (as St. *Peter* says in the *Acts*) *he did nothing else,*
 Acts 10. 38. *but go about doing good*, and benefitting men; curing their diseases, relieving their
 Matt. 4. 23. 9. wants, instructing their minds, reforming their manners, drawing them to God
 35. and goodness, disposing them to the attainment of everlasting bliss and salvari-
 on. 'Tis love, we may observe, which was the soul that animated and actua-
 ted him in all things; which carried him with unwearied resolution and alacri-
 ty through all the cruel hardships and toils, through all the dismal crosses and
 ignominies he endured: His life was in effect but one continual expression of
 charity, (differently exerting it self according to various opportunities, and cir-
 cumstances, and needs of men) the which was consummated, and sealed by his
 death; the highest instance of charity that could be; for, *Greater love hath no*
 John 15. 13. *man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friend.*

Wherein finally (in which life, I say, of *Jesus*) all holiness, all vertue, all goodness (futable to him, who was to be not only the teacher, and the persua-
 der of the best life, but a living standard and pattern thereof; who was to me-
 rit of God in man's behalf, to conciliate God's favour towards us, and appease
 his anger against us) do shine and sparkle with a beauty, and a lustre transcen-
 ding all expression. All which particulars might, were it now proper and sea-
 sonable, be thoroughly declared by instances extant in the Evangelical history.
 So that the characteristical qualities of the *Messias* do clearly and abundantly a-
 gree to *Jesus* our Lord.

His performances should next be considered and compared; but the time
 doth not admit that we should now proceed any farther.

*Now, blessing, and honour, and glory, and power be unto him, that sitteth upon
 the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. Amen.*

And

And in Jesus Christ, &c.

S E R M O N XVIII.

That Jesus is the True Messias.

ACTS IX. 22.

But Saul increased more in strength, and confounded the Jews, which dwelt at Damascus ----- Proving that this is the very Christ.



IN conformity to S. Paul's design and practice implied here, I have formerly propounded to explain, and perswade these particulars. 1. What is the right notion and reason of this name or title *Christ*. 2. That there was destinated to come into the world, a Person, who signally according to that right notion, should be *the Christ*. 3. That *Jesus*, whom we avow, is that Person, *the very Christ*. 4. In what manner, and upon what accounts the New Testament representeth *Jesus* to be the *Christ*. 5. What application the Point requireth.

In prosecution of which particulars, having dispatched the *first* and *second*, I did enter into the *third*, which is of highest consequence, beginning to declare that *Jesus*, our Lord, is the *Christ*, from the circumstances of his coming into the world, and from his personal qualifications; which having in some measure performed, I shall now proceed to declare the same from the exact correspondency of his undertakings and performances to those, which, according to ancient pre-significations, and prophecies, the *Messias* was designed to undertake and accomplish; together with the consequences of what the *Messias* was to do, and what answerably *Jesus* did effect.

1. One great performance of the *Messias*, was by inspiration, and in the name of God to make a complete discovery of divine truth; to publish a Law of universal and perpetual obligation; to institute a Religion consummate in all respects, which should correct the faults, and supply the defects of all precedent dispensations, which should therefore be, as it were, God's last will and testament, after which no other revelation was to be expected: *I will* (said Moses of him) *put* Deut. 18. 18. *words into his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I command him, and it shall come to pass, that whoever will not hearken unto my words, which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him:* By him Esay foretold, that God shall teach Isa. 2. 2. *us of his ways, and we shall walk in his paths, for out of Sion shall go forth the law, and the word of God from Jerusalem:* By him Jeremy signified, that God would Jer. 31. 34. *put his law into the inward parts of men, and write it in their hearts; it was, as* Ezek. 36. 27. *it is said in Daniel, part of his work to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal* Dan. 9. 24. *up the vision, and prophecy; and his days in the Prophets are commonly stiled the last days, because it seemeth, of the perfection of his doctrine, and immutability of his law; where such an entire instruction, and final resolution in all points was commonly expected by the Jews, as the Samaritan woman did intimate; I know* (said she, according to the current persuasions then) *that the Messias cometh,* John 4. 25. *and when he shall come, he will tell us all things.*

Now accordingly *Jesus*, (our hope, and Author of our faith) hath taught a Doctrine, hath proclaimed a Law, hath instituted a Religion, which upon strict and careful examination will be found most perfect in all respects; such in its nature as cannot but indispensibly oblige all that understand it, such as is worthy

of God, and futable to his designs of glorifying himself, and obliging his creature ; in short, he hath been Author of such an Institution, as may be demonstrated the most excellent and complete that can be. For, (briefly to shew this by considering the main; if not all imaginable excellencies of any Religion, Law or Doctrine) it is impossible that any Doctrine should assign a more true, proper, complete notion or character of God himself, more congruous to what reason dictateth, the works of nature declare, the purest tradition attesteth, or common experience doth intimate concerning God ; more apt to breed in our hearts the highest affection and reverence toward him, or to engage us in the strictest practice of duty and obedience to him ; none can ascribe unto God higher perfections of nature, can more assert unto him all his due rights and prerogatives, can better commend and justify to us all his actions and proceedings, can represent him more amiable in his goodness, more terrible in his justice, more glorious and venerable in all his ways of providence ; can consequently better direct or dispose us to render unto him a worship worthy of him, and acceptable to him ; can also therefore with more security and advantage commend unto us the imitation of him in our disposition and demeanour.

Nor could any doctrine more clearly and fully inform us concerning our selves ; concerning our nature, our original, our end, all our state, past, present, final ; what the dignity of our nature is, for what purposes we were designed and framed, wherein our happiness doth consist, what shall be our state after death, how we shall be judged, and dealt with then ; the knowledge of which particulars is of so immense consequence for the satisfaction of our minds, and direction of our lives ; concerning which therefore men in all times have so earnestly inquired and disputed, without any sure resolution but from hence.

Nor could a more accurate rule of life (more congruous to reason, and futable to our nature, or perfective thereof ; more conducive to our welfare, and our content ; more apt to procure each man's private good, and to promote the publick benefit of all) have been prescribed ; nothing can be more just, or comely, or pleasant, or beneficial to us, than are the duties of piety (consisting in love, reverence, gratitude, devotion, obedience, faith and repentance toward God) which Christianity doth require. No directions concerning our deportment toward our neighbours and brethren can be imagined comparable to those (those of hearty love, good-will, beneficence, compassion, readiness to forgive, meekness, peaceableness, and the like) which the Christian law enjoineeth. No precepts or advices concerning the management of our selves (the ordering our souls and our bodies in their respective functions and fruitions) can be devised more agreeable to sound reason, more productive of true welfare, and real delight unto us, than are those of being humble and modest in our conceits, calm and composed in our passions, sober and temperate in our enjoyments, patient and contented in our state, with the like, which the Christian Doctrine doth inculcate. No other method can raise us up so near to heaven and happiness as that which we here learn, of abstracting and elevating our minds above the fading glories, the unstable possessions, the vanishing delights of this world ; the fixing our thoughts, affections and hopes upon the concerns of a better future state.

*Negotiosa
scrupulositates
Tert.in Marc.
lib. 2.*

No Religion also can be purer from superstitious alloys, or freer from useless encumbrances (or from, as *Tertullian* calleth them, *busse scrupulositates*) than is this, (such as it is in its native simplicity, and as it came from its Author, before the pragmatistical curiosity, or domineering humour, or covetous designings of men had tampered with it) it onely requiring a rational and spiritual service, consisting in performance of substantial duties plainly necessary or profitable ; the ritual observances it enjoineeth, being as very few in number, in nature simple and easie to observe, so evidently reasonable, very decent and very useful, able to instruct us in, apt to excite us to the practice of most wholesome duties.

No Religion also can have the like advantage of setting before us a living copy, and visible standard of good practice, 'affording so compendious an instruction, and so efficacious an incitement to all piety and vertue : so absolutely perfect, so purposely designed, so fitly accommodated for our imitation, and withal so strongly engaging us thereto, as the example of *Jesus*, our Lord, such as it is in the *Gospels* represented to us.

Neither can any Religion build our duty upon more solid grounds, or draw it from better principles, or drive it to better ends, or press it with more valid inducements than ours ; which builds it upon conformity to the perfect nature of God, and to the dictates of his infallible wisdom, upon the holy will, and most just authority, of our natural Lord, and Maker ; which draweth it from love, reverence and gratitude to God, from a hearty good-will to men, and from a sober regard to our own true welfare ; which propoundeth God's honour, our neighbour's edification, and our own salvation as the principal ends of action ; which stirreth up good practice by minding us, that we shall thereby resemble God, express our thankfulness, and discharge our duty to him, obtain his mercy and favour, acquire present comfort of mind, and future bliss, avoid regrets of conscience here, and endless torments hereafter.

Neither can any Doctrine afford more encouragements to the endeavours of practising it than doth this, which tendereth sufficient help and ability toward the performance of whatever it enjoineeth ; offering (upon our seeking them, or asking for them) God's infallible wisdom to direct us in our darkneses and doubts, God's almighty strength to assist us in our temptations and combats, God's loving Spirit to comfort us in our afflictions and distresses.

Nor can any Doctrine in a more sure, or kindly manner appease and satisfy a man's conscience, so as to produce therein a well-grounded hope, and solid comfort ; to heal the wounds of bitter remorse and anxious fear, which the sense of guilt doth inflict, than doth this, which assureth us, that God Almighty, notwithstanding all our offences committed against him, is not only reconcileable to us, but desirous to become our friend ; that he doth upon our repentance, and compliance with his gentle terms, receive us unto perfect grace and favour, discharging all our guilts and debts however contracted ; that our endeavours to serve and please God, although imperfect and defective, if serious and sincere, shall be accepted and rewarded by him.

Such is the Doctrine, Law and Religion of *Jesus* ; expressed in a most uneffected and perspicuous way, with all the gravity and simplicity of speech, with all the majesty and authority of proposal becoming divine truth ; so excellent, and so complete in all respects, that it is beyond the imagination of man to conceive any thing better, yea, I dare say, repugnant to the nature of things that there should be any other way of Religion (different substantially from it) so very good. God himself, we may presume to say, cannot infuse truer notions concerning himself, or concerning us, cannot reveal more noble, or more useful truths ; cannot prescribe better laws or rules, cannot afford more proper means and aids, cannot propound more equal and reasonable terms, cannot offer higher encouragements and rewards, cannot discover his mind in a more excellent way than he hath done by *Jesus*, for his own glory and service, for our benefit and happiness : So that hence we may reasonably infer, that the Doctrine taught, the Law promulgated, the Religion instituted by *Jesus* in God's name, are the very same which the predictions concerning the *Messias* do refer unto, as the last, which should ever come from God, most full and perfect, universally and perpetually obliging.

2. Thus in general the Prophets spake concerning the *Messias* his Doctrine, and so that of *Jesus* correspondeth thereto : but of that Doctrine particularly it was signified, that it should be very comfortable, joyful and acceptable to Mankind ; as containing a Declaration (peculiar thereto) of God's kind and gracious Intentions toward us, overtures of special Mercy and Love, dispensations of all sorts of Spiritual Blessings ; the Pardon and Abolition of Sins committed, Peace and Satisfaction of Conscience, deliverance from Spiritual Slaveries and Captivities : *Rejoyce greatly, O Daughter of Sion, shout O Daughter of Jerusalem ; behold thy King cometh unto thee ;* So *Zechary* speaketh of his coming, and implieth the joyful purport of his Message : And, *How beautiful (saith Esay) upon the Mountains are the Feet of him that bringeth good Tidings, that publisheth Peace, that bringeth good Tidings of good, that publisheth Salvation, that sayeth unto Sion, thy God reigneth ?* and, *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me ; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good Tidings to the meek ; he hath sent me to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim Liberty to the Captives, and the opening of the Prison to them that are bound, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of Vengeance* (or

of Recompence, as the LXX render it) of our God; to comfort all that mourn, to give unto them that mourn in Sion Beauty for Ashes, the Oil of Joy for Mourning, the Garment of Praise for the Spirit of Heaviness. It is a part of what God in Jeremy promised to dispense by him: *I will forgive their Iniquity, and I will remember their Sin no more.* It is one of the Messias his performances — *to finish Transgression, and to make an end of Sins, and to make reconciliation for Iniquity; to sprinkle clean water on God's People, and to save them from their Uncleanesses.* In fine, the Prophet Zechary saith of his time, that *In that day there shall be a Fountain opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for Sin, and for Uncleaness.*

Now to all this the preaching of Jesus did exactly correspond; it being indeed, as it was named, a Gospel, or Message of good and joy; declaring the special good-will of God, and his merciful willingness to be reconciled to Mankind; offering Peace and Pardon to all that are sensible of their Guilt, and penitent for their Sin; imparting Rest, Comfort and Liberty to all that are weary and afflicted with Spiritual Burthens, Grievances and Slaveries; taking off all grievous yokes of Superstition, Servility and Sin; and in their stead imposing a no less sweet and pleasant, than just and reasonable Obedience; ministring all sorts of blessings needful for our succour, relief, ease, content and welfare; wholly breathing sweetest love (all kinds of love; love between God and man, between man and man, between man and his own conscience) filling the hearts of those who sincerely embrace and comply with it, with present joy, and raising in them glad some hopes of future bliss. It was indeed the most joyous sound that ever entred into man's ears, the most welcome news that ever was reported upon earth; news of a certain and perfect salvation from all the enemies of our welfare, from all the causes of mischief and misery to us; well therefore deserving that auspicious gratulation from the Angel: *Behold I bring you tidings of great joy, which shall be to all People.*

3. Collateral unto, or coincident with those performances (the teaching such a doctrine, publishing such a law, dispensing such blessings) was the formal institution, and establishment of a new everlasting covenant (different from all precedent covenants, and swallowing them up in its perfection) a covenant between God and man; wherein God, entering into a most strict alliance and relation with us, should be pleased to dispense the blessings of spiritual illumination and assistance, of mercy and favour, of salvation and felicity; wherein we in way of condition, according to obligations of justice and gratitude, should engage to return unto God by hearty repentance, and to persist in faithful obedience to him: Of such a Covenant the Messias was to be the Messenger and Mediator, or the Angel thereof (as the Prophet Malachy speaketh, alluding it seems to that Angel of God's presence, who ordained the Jewish Law, and conducted the Israelites toward the promised land) of which Covenant and its Mediator God in Esay thus spake: *I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and I will hold thine hand; and I will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison-house — and of the same he again: Incline your ear, and come unto me; hear and your soul shall live, and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David — Behold I have given him a witness to the people, a leader and commander to the people: So in general he speaketh thereof, and inviteth thereto; then a special part thereof he expresseth thus: Let the wicked man forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, and he will abundantly pardon.* Of the same Covenant God in Ezekiel speaketh thus: *I will set up one shepherd over them — and I will make with them a covenant of peace, and it shall be an everlasting covenant with them — and I will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore — they shall also walk in my judgments, and observe my statutes, and do them.* Of the same God thus declareth in Jeremy, most fully and plainly reckoning the particular blessings tendered therein: *Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and the house of Judah; not according to the covenant, that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; but this shall be the covenant, that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord,*

Lord, I will put my Law into their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people: And they shall teach no more every man his brother, saying, know the Lord; for they shall all know me from the least of them unto the greatest, saith the Lord; for I will forgive their Iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more; which words signify the tenour of that Covenant on God's part to import, that God would impart a full and clear discovery of his will unto them, whom it should concern; that he would afford to them all requisite means and helps qualifying them for the performance of their duty; that he would bestow on them (complying with the terms of this Covenant, and performing their duty) an entire remission of all their sins, with an assurance of his constant and perpetual favour.

Now that *Jesus* did institute such a Covenant, wherein all the benefits promised on God's part, and all the duties required on our parts, do punctually correspond to the terms of that predestined by the Prophets, is apparent by the whole tenour of the Christian Gospel; wherein a full declaration of God's will is held forth, so that no man (except out of wilfulness or negligence) can be ignorant thereof; wherein, upon condition of faith and repentance, God's mercy and pardon are exhibited and offered to all; wherein the communication of God's holy Spirit of grace (for directing and assisting the embracers of this Covenant in the practice of their duty) is promised and dispensed; wherein on our part faith in God (or heartily returning to him) and faithful observance of God's laws are required; wherein God declareth a most favourable regard and love (together with very near and endearing relations) to those who undertake and conform to his terms; of which new Covenant *Jesus* is represented the *Angel*, the *Mediator*, the *Sponsor*; having by his preaching declared it, by his merits and intercessions purchased and procured it, by his blood ratified, and assured it to us.

Luke 24. 47.
Acts 5. 31. 2.
38.
Heb. 10. 29.

Heb. 9. 15.
12. 24. 7. 22.
8. 6.
1 Tim. 2. 5.

4. In coincidence also with those performances, it is declared, that the *Messias* should erect a Kingdom spiritual in nature; universal in extent, and perpetual in duration; by the power and virtue whereof the enemies of God's people should be curb'd and quell'd; the subjects of which should live together in amity and peace, in safety and prosperity; wherein truth and righteousness should gloriously flourish. The chief testimonies of ancient Scripture predicting this Kingdom I had occasion before to mention, and shall not repeat them now; only concerning the nature and extent thereof I shall add somewhat, serving for illustration and proof of our main purpose.

That it was to be a spiritual Kingdom (not a visible dominion over the bodies and estates of men, managed by external force and co-action, but a government of mens hearts and consciences by secret, inspirations, and moral instructions or persuasions) may be several ways collected, and argued; it appeareth from the temper and disposition of its Founder, who was to be a *Prince of Peace*; of a peaceable, meek, patient and humble disposition; it may be inferred from his condition, which was not to be a state of external grandeur and magnificence, but of poverty and affliction; for he was to be as he is described, mean and despicable in appearance; having *no form or comeliness, no beauty, that when we should see him, we should desire him*; being a *man of sorrow and acquainted with grief*; it also followeth from the events happening to him, which were not to conquer and triumph openly in view of carnal eyes; but to be despised and rejected, to be afflicted, oppressed and slaughtered by men; the same we may learn from the manner of its establishment and propagation; which was not to be effected by force and violence, but by virtue of a quiet and gentle instruction; by reasonable words, not by hard blows: So doth the Prophet signify, when he saith of the *Messias*, that, *With righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth; and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall slay the wicked*; not by force of hands, or terrour of arms, not in furious and bloody combats, but by the spiritual rod of his mouth; with the soft breath of his lips he was to slay the wicked, converting them unto righteousness: So doth *Daniel* also imply when he saith, that a *stone cut out of the mountains without hands, should break in pieces, and consume all other Kingdoms*. Yea the nature thereof it self doth argue the same; for the laws enjoined, and duties required, the blessings ministred, and rewards propounded therein are purely spiritual, not relating to a temporal state, yea hardly consisting with secular domination;

Isa. 9. 6.

Isa. 53. 2, 3, 4.
7. 49. 7. 50. 6.

Isa. 11. 4.

Dan. 2. 44. 45.

nation ; as may appear by attending to its fundamental constitution ; or to the covenant settled between the Prince and subjects thereof ; wherein the divine spirit and grace, light and knowledge, mercy and pardon for sins, comfort of mind, and peace of conscience, God's special love and favour, things merely spiritual, are expressly promised ; but worldly power, wealth and prosperity, are pretermitted ; and thence may justly be presumed no ingredients, or appurtenances thereof. Indeed the constitution of a temporal, or worldly Kingdom, with visible pomp and lustre, such as the *Jews* (a grossly conceited, and sensually affected people) did, mistaking the Prophets, desire and expect, had been a thing, as very agreeable to the carnal or childish opinions of men, so in reasonable esteem of no considerable value, benefit or use to mankind : such a domination could only have concerned the mortal part, and temporal state of man ; it could only have procured some trivial conveniences for our bodies, or gratifications to our sense : the settlement also, and preservation of such a Kingdom (according to that vast extent, and long duration which the Prophets imply) seemeth, without quite altering the whole frame of humane nature, scarce possible ; and reasons there are obvious enough, why it would not be expedient, or beneficial for men : But the founding and upholding a spiritual Kingdom (such as we described) is evidently of inestimable benefit to the nobler and more divine part of men, may serve to promote the eternal welfare of our souls ; may easily without changing the natural appetites of men, or disturbing the world, be carried on any where, and subsist for ever by the occult influences of divine grace ; it consequently is most worthy of God to design and accomplish. Such a Kingdom therefore was meant by the Prophets, being indeed no other than a Church, or society of persons, with unanimous consent, heartily acknowledging the One true God of *Israel*, Maker of heaven and earth, for their Sovereign Prince and Law-giver ; submitting themselves in all their actions to his laws and commands, expecting protection and recompence of their obedience from him.

As for the general extent of this Kingdom, and the *Messias* his proceedings in settling and propagating it, that is also very perspicuously and copiously represented in the ancient Prophets, who declare that by him mankind (then immersed in deep ignorance and error, in wretched impiety and wickedness, in utter estrangement and averfation from God and goodness) should be reduced to the knowledge, worship and obedience of God ; that they should be received into God's protection, and should partake of his special favour ; that all nations of men should by the *Messias* be enlightned with saving knowledge, and converted to the practice of true righteousness ; that all men every where (all that would regard and observe his word, all in God's design and desire, in effect a numerous company of men) should by his means be aggregated to God's Church, and rendered God's people ; enjoying the benefits and privileges suitable to that state or relation : In expressing these things the ancient Scriptures are very pregnant and copious ; *Moses*, in that most divine Song (endited by God himself, and uttered in his name) which seemeth to contain the history, and the continual fate of the Jewish people doth foretell this, and concludeth his Song therewith ; as with the last matter, which should happen during God's special relation to that people, importing the period of *Judaism*, or of the *Israelitish* Theocracy. *Rejoyce* (saith he) *O ye nations with his people.* God in the second Psalm thus speaketh to the *Messias* : *Ask of me, and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for thy possession :* and in the 72. Psalm ; *His name* ('tis said) *shall endure for ever ; his name shall be continued as long as the sun, and men shall be blessed in him ; all nations shall call him blessed ; he shall have dominion also from sea, to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth ;* and elsewhere ; *All the ends of the earth shall remember, and turn unto the Lord, and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee :* and, *I will* (saith God in *Esay* concerning him) *give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayst be my salvation to the ends of the earth :* and, *The glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it ; The Lord hath made bare his holy arm, in the eyes of all nations ; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God :* and, *He shall not fail, nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth, and the Isles* (that is the *European Nations*) *shall wait for his law :* and, *In this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things,*

Deut. 32. 43.
Rom. 15. 10.
Psalm. 2. 8.

Psalm. 72. 17.
8. 1.

Psalm. 22. 27.
86. 9.

Isa. 46. 9.
Acts 13. 47.

Isa. 40. 5.
52. 10.
Luke 3. 6.

Isa. 42. 4.
Rom. 15. 2.

a feast of wine on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wine on the lees well refined; and he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations: and, In that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people, to it shall the Gentiles seek, and its rest shall be glorious: and, I am sought of them that asked not for me, I am found of them that sought me not; I said, behold me, behold me unto a nation, that was not called by my name: and, It shall come to pass in the last days (saith both E-
Isa. 25. 6, 7.
Isa. 11. 10.
Isa. 65. 1.
Rom. 9. 24.
Isa. 2. 2.
Mic. 4. 1.
 say and Micah in the same words) that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow unto it: From the rising of the Sun (saith God in Malachi) even unto the going down of the same my name shall be great among the Gentiles, and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering: and, I (saith God
Hos. 1. 10.
Rom. 9. 25, 26.
 in Hosea) will have mercy upon her that had not obtained mercy; and I will say unto them, which were not my people, Thou art my people; and they shall say, Thou art my God: In the place where it was said unto them, ye are not my people, it shall be said unto them, Ye are the sons of the living God: and, The abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee, (saith God to his Church) the forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee: Fear not, for I am with thee, I will bring thy seed from the East, and gather thee from the West; I will say to the North give up, and to the South keep not back; bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth: and, Sing, O barren, that thou didst not bear (tis said to the Gentile Church) break forth into singing, and cry aloud thou that didst not travel with child; for more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, saith the Lord; Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations — for thou shalt break forth on the right hand, and on the left, and thy seed shall inherit the Gen-
Isa. 60. 3.
Isa. 43. 5.
Isa. 54. 1.
Gal. 4. 26.
Ecc. 9.
Isa. 11, 12.
Acts 15. 15.
Isa. 35. 1.
 tiles — For thy Maker is thine husband (the Lord of hosts is his name) and thy Redeemer, the Holy one of Israel; The Lord of the whole earth shall be called — The wilderness, and the solitary place shall be glad for them; the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose, &c.

Such is the nature, and such the extent of the Messias his Kingdom; now that Jesus hath erected and settled a Kingdom of a spiritual and heavenly nature (the which is therefore in his Gospel styled the Kingdom of Heaven, the Kingdom of God, the Kingdom of Christ, the Kingdom that was to come) whereof God is the absolute Sovereign; the throne whereof is in heaven above, which beareth sway in the souls of men; wherein God governeth in effectual manner (most righteously and sweetly, with admirable wisdom, justice and clemency; with mighty power also, and awful authority) according to most excellent laws, by his holy word, and powerful spirit; proposing most precious rewards to the obedient subjects thereof, and threatening dreadful punishments to the rebellious; protecting and saving the faithful people from all their enemies (from the powers of darkness, from the temptations, allurements, menaces of the flesh and the world here, from death and hell hereafter) that also Jesus (who as Mediator between God and man, doth according to the Gospel, by authority derived from God, and in God's name, administer the government hereof) hath in effect been avowed as Lord and King; that his authority hath had great efficacy upon the minds and consciences of men; what noble trophies over sin and wickedness his word hath raised; in what glory and majesty through many ages he hath reigned; is evident from obvious records of history, and from plain experience.

The extent of this spiritual Empire raised by our Lord (of that doctrine which he taught, of that reformation which he introduced, of that Church, or spiritual society, knit together in faith and charity, which he founded of that whole dispensation, which he managed) is also thoroughly commensurate to the extent of whatever in these kinds the Messias was to achieve: The Empire of Jesus in its nature and design, according to right and obligation, is declared universal and boundless, co-extended, with the world it self, and comprehending all generations of men; all nations being summoned to come under the wings of its jurisdiction; all persons being invited to partake the benefits, and enjoy the privileges thereof: The Lord, and Judge of all men; the Saviour, and Redeemer of the world; the common light of men, and Captain of humane life; are titles, which Jesus assumed to himself: All things are delivered to me of my Father; Thou hast given him power over all flesh; All judgment is committed to the Son; yea, All
 power

John 17. 2. 5. power is given unto me in heaven and earth, such is the authority he claimeth, and
 21. 3. 35. asserteth to himself: Go into the World, preach the Gospel to every creature: Go,
 Matt. 28. 18. and discipline all nations, baptising them — such was the commission and
 Mark 16. 15. charge delivered by Jesus to his Officers, and Ministers: The grace of God which
 Matt. 28. 19. bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men; The times of ignorance God having wink-
 Luke 24. 46. ed at, doth now invite all men every where to repent; God was in Christ reconciling
 Tit. 2. 11. the World unto himself, not imputing their sins; God our Saviour will have all men
 Acts 17. 30. to be saved, and to come to the acknowledgment of the truth — The Gospel hath
 2 Cor. 5. 19. been preached to every creature under heaven; so do the Apostles declare the latitude
 1 Tim. 2. 4. of the Evangelical dispensation according to its nature and
 Col. 1. 23. design: So that well may we cry out with Clem. Alex. Harken

Ἀκούετε ἔν οι μακρὸν, ἀκούετε οι
 ἐγγύς ἐν ἀπεκρύβη πᾶσι ὁ λόγος· ὅτι
 ἔστι κοινὸν, ἐκάλυπται πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις
 ἡ εὐαγγελία· ὁ λόγος. Cl. Al. Protrept.

en ye that are afar off, hearken ye that are near; the word is not
 hid from, any 'tis a common light, it shineth to all men; there

is no Cimmerian in respect to the Gospel. So in design, and of right is Jesus his
 doctrine and dispensation common to all Nations, and to all persons; all in duty
 are obliged to entertain it; all may have the benefit thereof, who are fit, and
 willing to imbrace it; it doth not indeed obtrude its benefits upon unwilling, and
 thence unworthy persons; it useth no unkindly violence, or rude compulsion;
 but it alloweth, it inviteth, it intreateth, it engageth all men to come, excluding
 only those from a participation therein, who will not hear its call; who do not
 like, or love it.

In effect also this Kingdom hath been very large and vast, a considerable part
 of the world having very soon been subjugated by its virtue, and having sub-
 Matt. 24. 27. mitted thereto. As the lightning cometh out of the East, and shineth even unto the
 West, so shall the coming (or presence) of the Son of man be; said He concerning
 the suddain, and effectual spreading of his doctrine; and the event answered his
 prediction: for the Evangelical light did in an instant dart it self all about, so
 as in many places to dispell the night of ignorance, and to dissipate the fogs of
 wickedness: so that the utmost ends of the earth (of which according to the most
 literal sense we our selves are a most proper instance) are come under the possesi-
 on and government of Jesus; are reduced to the acknowledgment and veneration
 of the only true God; do partake of God's favour, and hope in his mercy; do
 with good conscience (in that measure, which is expectable from the natural in-
 firmity and pravity of man, in various degrees, some more, some less strictly)
 Chryl. Tom. 6. serve God, and obey his laws: A Church, and spiritual Sion (spread over divers
 Orat. 61. regions and countries, consisting of several nations and languages) compacted in
 page 634. good order, and sweet communion, hath through a long course of time visibly
 flourished in competent degrees of peace, prosperity and glory; commending and
 cherishing true religion, charity and sobriety; offering continual sacrifices of ho-
 ly devotion unto God, celebrating the divine name and praises; producing many
 noble examples of all piety and virtue; a Church in all regards adequate to the
 propheticall expressions concerning that which was out of the whole world to be
 collected, and constituted by the Messias.

5. If we do singly compare the particular consequences and successes of the
 Messias his performances, expressed by the Prophets; we shall find an exact cor-
 respondence to what hath followed the undertakings and performances of our Lord.

They tell us, that great opposition should be made against it by the Jews, and
 by the * Gentiles.

* Psa. 2. 1.
 vid. Chryl.
 Tom. 7. Orat.
 61. p. 637.
 Pl. 72. 11. 17.

They tell us, that the Messias his person should be acknowledged, worshipped,
 and blessed all over the world: — All nations (say they) shall serve him, — all
 nations shall call him blessed: This we see for almost 1700 years abundantly per-
 formed in respect to Jesus, by the daily services of praise and thanksgiving yield-
 ed to him in the Universal Church.

They say, that the knowledge of God shall be far extended, and diffused over
 the world; The earth, say they, shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters
 cover the sea; this we see fulfilled by the large progagation of Christian doctrine.

They affirm, that righteousness in the times of the Messias should commonly
 prosper, and be in high request, according to that: In his days shall the righteous
 flourish: so we see, that vertue and piety have ever since Jesus commended them
 to the world, enjoyed much repute, having been practised among the professors of
 his Religion in such degrees, and according to such manner as the condition of
 this

this world, the humours of men, and the nature of humane affairs do admit ; nor reasonably can any prophecies be understood to mean farther.

They farther intimate, that upon the entertainment of the *Messias* his doctrine and law, abundance of peace and concord, of love and charity, of innocence and justice should ensue ; so that the fellow-subjects of this Kingdom, although of different states and complexions (the *wolf and the lamb, the leopard and the kid,* Psal. 72. 7. 85. 10. *the lion and the ox, the ass and the young child ;* that is, the rich and the poor, Iſa. 11. 6. 65. 25. 2. 4. 66. 12. the mighty and the weak, the fierce and the gentle, the crafty and the simple sorts of men) should live and converse together amicably, safely and pleasantly, without molesting, wronging, oppressing and devouring ; but rather helping, and benefiting each other : *They shall not* (saith the Prophet) *hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain :* To the making good of which particular, the doctrine of *Jesus* doth temper and compose the minds of those who do truly understand and embrace it : Such as are Christians indeed (careful followers of *Jesus* his rules and example) are thereby disposed to maintain peace and amity between themselves, yea, to perform all offices of charity and kindness to one another, although their conditions in the world, their complexions, their endowments and abilities be however different ; for the Christian doctrine representeth all that embrace it as fellow-servants of the same Lord, as brethren and children of the same Father, as members of the same body, as objects of the same divine regard and love, as partakers of the same privileges, professors of the same truth, consorts of the same hope, co-heirs of the same glory and happiness, as thence united and allied to one another by the strictest bands, and most endearing relations ; hence it suppleth the stoutest heart, and sweeteneth the fiercest tempers ; it inclineth persons of highest state, power, wealth, knowledge to condescensive humility, and meekness toward the meanest ; this reason presently occurring to every Christian mind, that no Christian Brother is indeed contemptible, can without folly, may without sin be contemned : Whence although *Jesus* his doctrine hath not quite removed wars and contentions out of the world, yea, not out of that part thereof which doth acknowledge him (for that were a thing impossible, without a total alteration of humane nature, or rooting out of it those appetites of pride, voluptuousness, self-love, and covetousness, which are the seeds of strife ; the effecting which it cannot be supposed that the Prophets did intend) yet hath it done considerably toward it ; it hath disposed many persons (many great and considerable in the world) to a very just, innocent and peaceable Conversation ; it hath kindled ardent love and compassion toward all mankind in many hearts, it hath produced great fruits of charity and bounty in persons of all sorts, it hath had no small influence upon the common state of things, causing humane affairs to be managed with much equity and gentleness, retraining outrageous iniquity and oppression.

It was also farther particularly foretold, that great Princes and Potentates should submit to the *Messias*, seriously avowing his authority over them, yielding veneration to his name, and obedience to his laws ; with their power and wealth promoting and encouraging the Religion instituted by him, defending and cherishing his faithful people : *All Kings* (saith the *Psalmist* of him) *shall fall before him ; all nations shall do him service :* To a servant of rulers (saith *Eſaias* Iſa. 49. 7. 234 also of him) *Kings shall see and arise, Princes also shall do worship :* And the same Prophet concerning his Church ; *Kings* (saith he) *shall be thy nursing fathers, and Queens thy nursing mothers ; they shall bow down to thee with their face toward the earth, and lick up the dust of thy feet ; — The Gentiles shall come to thy light, and Kings to the brightness of thy rising ; — The sons of strangers shall build up thy walls, and their Kings shall minister unto thee ; — Thou shalt suck the milk of the Gentiles, and shalt suck the breasts of Kings ; — The Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all Kings thy glory.* All this we see plainly to have been accomplished, for that soon the highest of earthly powers did submit and stoop thereto ; that many great Princes (great and glorious as even the world hath known any ; such as *Constantine, Theodosius, Charlemagne,* and others of like illustrious renown) have willingly entertained *Jesus* his doctrine, and gladly undergone his yoke ; that long successions of Emperors and Kings, through the best frequented and most civilized part of the World, have seriously professed them-

Οὐ γὰρ ἀρνησάμεθα αὐτὸν, ἐφ' ᾧ μάλιστα
χαίρων συνδεδεμένοι ὑμῶντες προυκέναι.
Conit. apud Euf. de Vit. Conit. 3.

Ἐγὼ δὲ συνδεδεμένος ὑμῶντες καὶ
ὑποβόλῃ εἶναι χαίρων. Conit. apud
Socr. 1. 9. in Epist. ad Eccl. Alex-
andr.

selves the subjects and servants of *Jesus* ; expressing humble adoration of his person, and yielding observance to his laws; maintaining the profession of his Religion by their power, supporting the Ministers of it by their bounty, cherishing the practice thereof by manifold helps and encouragements; they have seemed ambitious of titles drawn from performances of this nature, affecting and glorying to be styled

most Christian Kings, Catholick Kings, Defenders of the Faith, and Sons of the Church.

It was also to be a particular consequence of what the *Messias* should do, that by virtue of his performances Idolatry (that is the worship of wicked Spirits, or of fictitious Deities) should in a conspicuous manner be vanquished, driven away, and destroyed; the worship of the only true God being substituted in its room:

Isa. 2. 17, 18.
Ezek. 36. 25.
Zech. 13. 2.

The Lord alone (saith Esay concerning his time) shall be exalted in that day, and the Idols he shall utterly abolish: and, It shall come to pass (saith Zechary) in that day, saith the Lord of hosts, I will cut off the name of the Idols out of the land, and they shall be no more remembred; and also I will call the Prophets, and the unclean spirits to pass out of the land. Now this we know was soon effected by the doctrine of our Lord, in a most remarkable manner: Idolatry in all places where it came, did flee and vanish before it; the Devil's frauds (whereby he so long had

John 12. 31.
16. 11.
Eph. 2. 2.
2 Cor. 4. 8.
Col. 1. 13.
Acts 26. 18.
Matt. 12. 29.
Luke 11. 21.
Col. 2. 15.
John 12. 31.
16. 11.
1 John 3. 8.

abused and befooled mankind) being detected, and that authority, which he had usurped over the World, being utterly disavowed; all the pack of infernal Apostate Spirits being not only rejected and disclaimed, but scorned and detested. *Jesus* (as the Gospel telleth us, and as Experience confirmeth) did combat the *strong one*, did baffle and bind him, he disarmed and rifled him, he triumphed over him, and exposed him to shame; he cast him out, and dissolved all his works. At the appearance of *Jesus* his Doctrine, and the sound of his Name, his Altars were deserted, his Temples fell down, his Oracles were struck dumb, his Arts were supplanted, all his Worship and Kingdom were quite subverted. The sottish adoration of Creatures (by the suggestion also of Satan, and by Man's vain fancy advanced to a participation of divine honour) was also presently banished, and thrown away; the only true God (the Maker and Lord of all things) being thenceforth acknowledged and adored as the only fountain of Good, and the sole object of Worship.

Καὶ γὰρ διὰ
δύναμις.
Heb. 9. 10.
Isa. 65. 17.
66. 22. 43. 18.

Again whereas in regard to all these performances, the state of things constituted by the *Messias* is described so different from the former state of mankind, that it is called the creation of a new world: *For behold (saith God in Esay concerning the Messias his times) I create new heavens, and a new earth, and the former shall not be remembred, nor come into mind* (whence the Jews commonly before our Lord's time were used to call the *Messias* his time *the world to come, the future*

Θικμολογία
μέλλουσιν.
Heb. 2. 5.
Ὁ μέλλων
αἰών.
Heb. 6. 5.
Orig. in
Cels. 3.

age; It is plain that *Jesus* may well be esteemed to have accomplished the intent of those expressions; he (as the ἐπανορθωτὴς τοῦ κόσμου, the rectifier and rearer of the world, as Origen calleth him) having wrought so huge alterations in the minds, and hearts, and lives of men, in their principles and opinions, in their dispositions, and in their practices; having so changed the face of affairs, and reformed the course of things in the world; bringing men out of lamentable darkness and errour into clear light and knowledge, rescuing them from superstition, impiety and wickedness, and engaging them into ways of true religion, holiness and righteousness; so many persons being apparently *renewed in the spirit of their minds*; being made *new creatures, created according to God in righteousness, and true holiness*; so that (as the Apostle speaks) *old things are passed away, behold all things are become new*; so that what the contumacious Jews, in anger and ill-will did call *Jesus* his instruments, had a true sense; they were οἱ τῶν αἰσχυμένων ἀναστατώντες, they who had turned the world upside down; they did so indeed, but so as to settle it in a better posture.

Eph. 4. 23, 24.
2 Cor. 5. 17.

Acts 17. 6.

Οἱ δὲ κατήγο-
ροι τοῦ Χριστιανισ-
μοῦ ἔχ-
ουσιν, ὅτι
Orig. in Cels.
lib. 1. p. 50.
Vid. Chryf.
in 1 Cor. 1.

Concerning which good effects of Christian Religion the ancient Christians had good reason to glory, and to say with Origen; *The adversaries of Christianity do not discern, how many mens diseases of soul, and how many floods of vices have been restrained; and how many mens savage manners have been tamed by reason of the Christian doctrine; wherefore being satisfied with the publick beneficialness thereof, which by a new method doth free men from many mischiefs, they ought willingly to*

render

render thanks thereto, and to yield testimony, if not to the truth of it, yet to its probability to mankind.

There remain behind several important considerations appertaining to this purpose, concerning the performances of the *Messias*, and events about him; His being to suffer grievous things from men, and for men; his performing miraculous works; the yielding various attestations from heaven to his person and doctrine; from the congruity of which particulars to what *Jesus* did endure, and act; and to what God hath done in regard to him, the truth of our Conclusion, That *Jesus is the Christ*, will be manifest: but time now forbiddeth the prosecution of those matters; and I must therefore reserve it to an other occasion

Now, To him that is able to keep us from * falling, and to present us blameless * Offending, before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, To the onely wise God our Saviour Jude 24, 25. be glory, and majesty, dominion and power, both now, and for ever.

Unto the King * eternal, immortal, invisible, the onely wise God, be honour and * Of ages. glory for ever and ever. Amen. 1 Tim. 1. 17

Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power be unto him, that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. Rev. 5. 13.

Salvation be unto our God, which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb. Apoc. 7. 10.

Amen; Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen. Apoc. 7. 12.

Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. Apoc. 5. 12.

Unto him, that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood; and hath made us Kings and Priests unto God, and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen. Apoc. 1. 5.

And in Jesus Christ, &c.

S E R M O N XIX.

That *Jesus* is the True *Messias*.

A C T S IX. 22.

----- Proving that *Jesus* is the *Christ*.



WHAT is the true notion of the name or Title *Christ*, we (in discoursing formerly upon this Text) did explain. That one Person, to whom that notion signally doth agree, was by God's especial determination to come into the world, we did also in the next place, from propheticall instruction (back'd with the common tradition, and current opinion of God's people) declare. We farther in the sequel did propound to shew, that *Jesus* (whom we acknowledge) was that very Person; the *Messias* predicted by the Prophets, and expected by the *Jews*. This we have already (in the foregoing discourses, proved from several circumstances of his birth and coming among men; from his personal qualification, and from divers illustrious performances managed by him, in correspondency to what the Prophets foretold concerning the *Messias*. The same we now proceed to confirm from other very considerable particulars foretold by them, and suting to him; and first from those things, which the *Messias* was to undergo, and suffer. Acts 3. 17; Luke 18. 31.

That the *Messias* was to come in an humble and homely manner (without appearances of worldly splendour or grandeur) that he was to converse among men in a state of external poverty and meanness ; that he was to be disregarded and despised by men ; that he was to cause offences, and to find oppositions in his proceedings ; that he was to be repulsed and rejected, to be scorned and hated, to be disgracefully and hardly treated, to be grievously persecuted and afflicted ; yea that at last he was to be persecuted, condemned and executed as a malefactor, is a truth which the *Jews* (although they firmly believed, and earnestly expected the coming of a *Messias*) did not, and indeed were hardly capable to entertain. It was a point repugnant to the whole frame of their conceits, yea inconsistent with the nature and drift of their Religion, as they understood it. For their Religion in its surface (deeper than which their gross fancy could not penetrate) did represent earthly wealth, dignity and prosperity as things highly valuable ; did propound them as very proper (if not as the sole) rewards of piety and obedience ; did imply consequently the possession of them to be certain arguments of the divine good-will and regard ; they could not therefore but esteem poverty, affliction and disgrace, as curses from heaven, and plain indications of God's disfavour toward those on whom they fell : They particularly did conceit, that to be rich was a necessary qualification to a Prophet (no less necessary, than to be of a good complexion, of a good capacity, of a good life) *Spiritus Dei non requiescit super pauperem* ; the Spirit of God rests not upon a poor man (that is, no special communications of grace, wisdom, goodness, are ever by God afforded to persons of a low or afflicted condition) was a Rule they had framed, and which passed among them. That *He* therefore, who was designed to be so notable a Prophet ; who was to have the honour of being so special an instrument of promoting God's service and glory ; who therefore must be so highly favoured by God, should appear despicable, and undergo great afflictions, was a notion that could not but seem very absurd, could not otherwise than be very abominable to them. They had also (in congruity to those prejudices, abetted by that extream self-love and self-flattery, which were peculiar to that Nation) raised in themselves a strong opinion, that the *Messias* was to come in a great visible state and power ; to do acts of great prowess and renown, to bring the Nations of the world into subjection under him, and so to reign among them in glorious majesty and prosperity. When *Jesus* therefore (however otherwise answerable in his circumstances, qualifications and performances to the prophetic characters of the *Messias*) did appear, such as he did, with pretences (or intimations rather) that he was the *Messias*, their stomach rose at it, they were hugely offended at him, they deemed him not only a mad-man (one possessed or distracted) and an impostour, but a blasphemer ; for to be no less than blasphemy they took it, for so pitiful a wretch to arrogate unto himself so high a dignity, so near a relation to God, as the being the *Messias* did import. We see even the Disciples of our Lord so deeply tainted with this National prejudice, that (even after they had acknowledged him to be the *Christ*) they could not with patience hear him foretelling what should befall him ; (S. *Peter*, upon that occasion, even just after he had confessed him to be the *Christ*, did, as the Text says, take him and began to rebuke him, saying, *Be it far from thee, Lord*) Yea presently after that he most plainly had described his sufferings to them, they could not forbear dreaming of Kingdoms, and being Grandees in them ; yea, even after our Lord's passion and resurrection, this fancy still possessed them ; for even then they demand of him, whether he would at that time restore the Kingdom unto Israel (meaning such an external visible Kingdom.)

This hence of all things notifying the *Messias* seems to be the only particular, which in general the *Jews* did not, or would not see and acknowledge : and this caused them to oversee all the rest, how clearly soever shining in, and about the Person of *Jesus*. This cloud hindered them from discerning the excellency of his doctrine, from regarding the sanctity of his life, from being affected with the wonderfulness of his works ; from minding or crediting all the testimonies ministered from heaven unto him. This (as S. *Paul* tells us) was the great scandal which obstructed their embracing the Gospel. We cannot therefore here, as in other particulars, alledge the general consent of God's people, in expounding the Prophets according to our sense ; this being one of those Points, in respect

Nisi enim ignoratus nihil pareri possit. Tert. in Marc. 3. 6.
1 Cor. 1. 23.

Vid. Tert. ibid.

to which the Prophets did foresee and foretell their perverse stupidity and incredulity ; that they should *look and not see, hear and not understand* ; yielding here- in special occasion to that complaint ; *Who hath believed our report ?*

Isa. 6. 9.
Ezek. 12. 2.
Matt. 13. 13.
Acts 28. 26.
Isa. 53. 1.

Yet notwithstanding their (affected) blindness, there is no particular concern- ing the *Messias*, in the ancient Scripture, either more frequently (in way of my- stical insinuation, or adumbration) glanced at ; or more clearly (in direct and plain language) expressed ; or which also by reasonable deductions thence may be infer'd more strongly than this. *S. Peter* affirms that *God had foreshew'd it by the mouth of all his Prophets* (not only of some, but of *all his Prophets* :) The same our Lord himself did signify before his departure to his Disciples out of *Moses*, the *Prophets* and *Psalms*, shewing them this particular, and opening their minds to understand the Scriptures concerning it ; concluding his discourse to them thus, *ὅτι ἔτσι γέγραπται, ὅτι ἔτσι ἔδει παρ' ὅν ἔχουσιν, Thus it was written, and thus ought Christ* (according to the prophetical prefigurations and predictions) *to suffer.*

Acts 3. 18:
Luk 24. 44

For the explaining and confirming of which truth, let us presume here to make a preparatory discourse or digression (not unseasonable perhaps, or improper to our purpose) concerning the nature of divine prefigurations, which may serve to declare the pertinency of many citations produced out of the ancient Scripture in the *New Testament* (the which, together with others connected to them, or bear- ing analogy to them, we also, being assured of their design by the authority of our Lord and his Apostles, may safely presume after them to apply to the same purposes.) We may then consider, that the All-wise God, (who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, and to whom all things are present) ha- ving before eternal times (as *St. Paul* speaketh) determined in due time to send the *Messias* for accomplishing the greatest design, that ever was to be managed in this world (which should bring the highest glory to himself, and procure the great- est benefit to the principal of his creatures here) did by his incomprehensible pro- vidence so order things, that all the special dispensations preceding it should have a fit tendency, and advantageous reference thereto ; so that when it came upon the stage, it might appear, that the main of the plot consisted therein, and that whatever before was acted, had a principal respect thereto. As therefore from the beginning of things God did in a gradual method make real preparations toward it, by steps imparting discoveries of his mind about it, or in order to it (some- what to *Adam* himself, more to *Abraham* and the *Patriarchs*, somewhat farther to *Moses*, much more yet to divers of the Prophets among his chosen people, who not only foretold largely concerning it, but delivered several instructions confor- mable to it, and nearly conducing to the promoting thereof.) So he did also take especial care by many apposite *resemblances*, handsomely inserted into all his dispensations, to set it out, and to insinuate his meaning about it ; that so at length it might shew it self-with more solemnity, and less surprise. The most e- minent persons therefore, whom he raised up and employ'd in his affairs tending to that end, as they did resemble the *Messias* in being instruments of his particu- lar grace and providence (being indeed inferiour Christs and Mediatours, and partial Saviours of his people, as they are sometimes called) so they were ordered in several circumstances of their persons, in divers actions they did, in the princi- pal accidents befalling them to represent him ; as also the rites and services insti- tuted by them were adapted to the same purpose ; they and all things about them being * fitted by God's especial wise care so as to be congruous emblems and sha- dows prefiguring the Christ, and what appertained to him ; his circumstances and accidents, his performances, his institutions. Thus was *Adam* (as *S. Paul* calls him) a type of *Christ* ; *Abel*, *Melchizedek*, *Isaac*, *Moses*, *Joshua*, *David*, *Solomon*, *Zorobabel* are also intimated to have been such ; the most signal things done by them, or befalling them, having been suited to answer somewhat that was remarkable concerning him ; We may say of them all, as the Apostle to the *Hebrews* says of the *Jewish Priests*. *They served to the subindication and shadowing of heavenly things* (ὅτι τὸν ἀποδείγματι καὶ σκιά λατρεύον τῶν ἐπουρανίων.) In *David* particularly this relation is so plain, that because thereof often (as we before noted) in the Prophets, (*Je- remy*, *Ezekiel*, *Hosea*) the *Messias* is called by his Name. It indeed well suited the dignity of this great Person, and the importance of his business, that he should have such notable ushers, heralds and harbingers *going before his face* ; furnished with conspicuous badges and ensigns denoting their relation to him ; It was pro-

Eph. 1. 11.
2 Tim. 1. 9.
Tit. 1. 2.
1 Cor. 2. 7.
Eph. 1. 3. 3. 9.
Rom. 16. 25.
Col. 1. 26.

Nonna Sed-
pūma Eu-
lebius calls
them.
Eccl. H. 1. 3.
Heb. 8. 6.
Gal. 3. 19.
Neh. 9. 27.
Acts 7. 35.
ἐκωνοὶ
Χριστοῦ
(Christ in
effigie) Eu-
lebius calls
them. Eccl.
H. 1. 4.
* Heb. 8. 5.
Exod. 25. 40.
Rom. 5. 14.

Heb. 8. 5.

Heb. 8. 5. 10.
1. 9. 23.

- Gal. 4. 24. per, that God should appear always to have had an express care, and especial regard toward him. It consequently serves for our edification; for that we duely comparing things, and discerning this admirable correspondence, may be somewhat instructed thereby, and somewhat confirmed in our faith, may be excited to the admiration of God's wisdom and goodness (so provident for our good) may also be induced thereby the more highly to adore the *Messias*, and to esteem his design. *All these things* (saith *S. Paul*, having compared divers things concerning *Moses* to things concerning *Christ*) *happened as types, and they were written for our admonition, on whom the ends of the world are come.* It is also (for illustration, and also for proof of these things) to be observed, that because those eminent servants of God were representatives of *Christ*, many things are spoken of them as such; many things are ascribed to them; which only or chiefly were intended of him; their names are used as veils to cover divers things concerning him, which it seemed not to divine wisdom convenient or seasonable in a more open and clear manner to disclose promiscuously to all men; (Why God should chuse to express things of this nature in such a manner, we need not to determine; it may be perhaps for reasons best known to himself, and above our ken or cognizance; yet probable reasons may be assigned for it; yea some more than probable being hinted in Scripture; it may be for a decent and harmonious distinction of times, of dispensations, of persons; it may be from the depth of things to conciliate a reverence to them, and to raise the price of knowing them, by the difficulty of doing so; it may be to exercise and improve mens understanding, to enflame their desire, to excite their industry, to provoke their devotion, to render them humble; it may be to reward an honest and diligent study of God's word; it may be for occasion of freely conveying special gifts of interpretation; it may be to conceal some things from some persons unfit, or unworthy to know them, especially from persons haughty and self-conceited; it may be to use the ignorance of some as a means to produce some great event (*If they had known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory*) it cannot be supposed necessary that all things should be plainly discovered to all persons; it is evident that some things are purposely couched in parabolical and mysterious expression; it is particularly the manner of prophetic instruction frequently to involve things, the full and clear knowledge of which is not congruous to every season and every capacity; but to return from out of this parenthesis to our case.) That under the names of Persons representing *Christ* (or of things we may add adumbrating his things) many things are intimated concerning him and his dispensations, may be collected and confirmed from hence, that many things are attributed to persons (and to things also) which do not agree to them; many things were promised, which appear never accomplished, except after a very improper and hyperbolical manner of expression, or according to an enormous wildness of interpretation; such as doth not well sute to the nature of true histories, and serious promises. Thus (for instance) are many things foretold concerning the large extent and prosperous estate of the *Jewish Church*, which history and experience testifie never (according to strictness of literal acception, yea not in any tolerable degree near the height of what the words import) to have happened. Thus also (as the Apostle to the *Hebrews* well argueth) effects are attributed to the *Jewish* rites and sacrifices, which according to the nature of the thing cannot belong to them, otherwise than as shadows and substitutes of higher things. Thus also, what is, with solemn oath, promised to *Solomon* (concerning the vast extent, and endless duration of his empire in righteousness, peace and prosperity; together with his mighty acts and victorious achievements) doth not appear directly in any competent measure to have been performed. Thus also *David* (as *S. Peter* observes and argues in the second of the *Acts*) speaketh many things of himself, which cannot be conceived properly and literally agreeable to him. Such things therefore are reasonably supposed to be intimations of somewhat appertaining to the future most perfect state of things under the *Messias*; to concern him (who was to be the end of the Law) and his dispensation, which was to contain the accomplishment of all things predicted and presigned. This is that which Saint *Austin* signifies when he says,
- Which*

ὅτι καὶ αὐτοὶ τὰ μόνα καὶ ἀληθῆς
 Χριστὸς τῶν πάντων βασιλεύοντες θεοὶ
 λόγος βασιλεὺς καὶ ἀρχὴ καὶ ὁμοῖα τὰς
 πύμης δι' αὐτῶν ἐγενήθη. (Euleb. 10. &c.)
 1 Cor. 10, 11, 6.

Vid. de Script.
 Obj. & Propb.
 Chryl. Tom. 6.
 pag. 649 &c.
 & 658, &c.

Apo. 2. 7. &c.
 13. 18. 17. 9.
 Matt. 13. 9.
 24. 15.
 Dan. 9. 1.
 John 5. 39.
 Luke 24. 45.
 1 Cor. 12. 10.
 14. 26.
 Eph. 1. 9, 10.

Matt. 13. 13.
 11. 25. 7. 6.

Acts 3. 17.
 1 Cor. 2. 8.

Isa. 25. 8.

Heb. 10. 4.

Psal. 45. 72.
 83, &c.

Acts 2. 29.

Rom. 10. 4.
 2 Cor. 3. 13.
 Luke 22. 37.

Which Christ (saith he, *and what concerns him*) — all the promises of that nation, all their prophecies, priesthood, sacrifices, their temple, and altogether all their sacraments did re-
found, or express.

Quem Christum — omnia gentis illius promissa, omnes prophetie, sacerdotia, sacrificia, templum, & cuncta omnino sacramenta sponserunt. Aug. ad Voluf. Ep. 3.

Neither are these things only said according to suppositions assumed in the *New Testament*, but they agree (as to their general importance) to the sense of the ancient *Jews*, who did conceive such mysterious references often to lie couched under the letter of Scriptures. They supposed a *Midrash* or mystical sense of Scripture, which they very studiously (even to excess commonly) did search after. It was (as *Lud. Capellus* affirms) a confident and constant opinion of their Doctors, that all things in *Moses* his Law were typical, and capable of mystical exposition. And *Philo's* Writings (composed in, or immediately after our Saviour's times) are a plain confirmation of what he saith; we have also several instances and intimations thereof in the *New Testament*. Neither probably would the Apostles in their discourses and disputations with the *Jews* have used this way of interpreting and citing passages of Scripture, if they in general had not admitted and approved it.

Now these things being (cursorily) premised, we return into our way, and say, that the *Messias* his being to suffer was in divers passages of the ancient Scripture prefigured. Supposing the thing it self should be, there is a peculiar reason, why it should be so represented, thus expressed by *Tertullian*:

The Sacrament indeed (saith he) *of Christ's passion ought to have been figured in the* (ancient) *predication; forasmuch as that the more incredible it was, if it should have been preached nakedly, the more offensive it would have been; and the more magnificent it was, the more it was to be shaded, that the difficulty of understanding it might cause the seeking of God's grace.*

Utrique Sacramentum passionis ipsius figurari in predicationibus oportuerat; quantoque incredibile, tanto magis scandalum futurum; quantoque magnificum, tanto magis adumbrandum, ut difficultas intellectus gratiam Dei quareret. Tertull. in Judæos. cap. 10.

Supposing also it should be, the passages about *Abel*, *Isaac*, *Josias*, *Jeremy*, (and the like) may congruously be applied thereto; The elevation of the *Brazen Serpent*, and the killing of the *Paschal Lamb* may appositely represent it; the *Jewish* Priests, with all their Sacrifices, may also with reason be brought in and accommodated thereto: These things are not indeed by themselves alone apt peremptorily to evince, that it should be; yet do they handsomely sute it, and adorn the supposition thereof, according to the notion we touched about the typical relation between the matters of the *Old World* before the *Messias*, and those of the *New* one after him. But with a clearer evidence and stronger force we may affirm, that the *Messias* his sufferings were implied in the afflictions of his representative King *David*, such as he in several *Psalms* (the 35, 69, 109, 118, and especially in the 22. *Psalms*) describeth them; wherein divers passages (expressing the extreme sadness and forlornness of his condition) occur, which by the history of his life, do not so well, according to the literal signification of words, appear congruous to his Person; which therefore there is a necessity, or (at least) much reason that they should be applied to the *Messias*, whom *David* did represent.

Which being admitted, comparing then the passages we have there to what befel *Jesus*, we shall find an admirable harmony, there being scarce any part of his affliction in his life, or any circumstance thereof at his death, which is not in emphatical and express terms there set out. There we have expressed his low and despicable estate (*I am a worm, and no man; the reproach of men and despised of the people*) The causeless hatred and enmity of the populacy and of the Great ones toward him: (*They that hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of my head; they that would destroy me, being mine enemies wrongfully, are mighty: They compassed me about with words of hatred, and fought against me without a cause.*) The ingrateful requital made to him for all the good done by him, and intended by him (*They rewarded me evil for good, and hatred for my love.*) Their rejecting him (*The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone in the corner.*) Their insidious and calumnious proceedings against him (*Without cause have they hid for me their net, in a pit which without cause they have digged for my soul: and, False witnesses did rise up; they laid to my charge things that I knew not: and, The mouth of the wicked and the mouth of the deceitful are opened against me, they have spoken against me with a lying tongue.*) Their bitter insulting over him in his affliction (*But in mine adversity they rejoiced, and gathered themselves together, yea*
the

Psal. 22. 6.

Psal. 69. 4.

Psal. 35. 7. 109. 3.

Psal. 35. 12.

Psal. 118. 22.

Psal. 35. 7, 11.

Psal. 109. 2.

Psal. 35. 15.

Psal. 69. 26.

the abjects gathered themselves together against me — They persecute him, whom thou hast smitten, and they talk to the grief of those, whom thou hast wounded : *καὶ οἱ ἐπὶ τὸν ἀντὶ τοῦ ὀνόματός σου ἐπιδιωκόμενοι καὶ ἐπιδιωκόμενοι*, and to the smart of my wounds, they added, (say the LXX.) Their scornful reviling; flouting, and mocking him (All they that see me laugh me to scorn, they shoot the lip; they shake the head (saying) He trusted in the Lord that he would deliver him, let him deliver him, seeing he delighteth in him.) I became a reproach unto them, when they looked upon me, they shook their heads. They opened their mouth wide against me, and said Aha, Aha; our eye hath seen it. *Ἐπείεσαν με, ὑπερυψηλοῦσαν με μυκτησμένων ἑβούζαν ἐπ' ἐμὲ τὰς ὀφθαλμοὺς αὐτῶν.* They tempted me, they extremely mocked me, they gnashed their teeth upon me.) The cruel manner of their dealing with him (Dogs have compassed me, the assembly of the wicked have enclosed me; they pierced my hands and my feet; I may tell all my bones; they look and stare upon me.) Their dealing with him, when in his distress he called for some refreshment (They gave me gall for my meat, and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.) Their disposal of his garments upon his suffering (They parted my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture.) His being deserted of his friends, and destitute of all consolation (I am become a stranger to my brethren, and an alien unto my mothers children. — I am full of heaviness, and I looked for some to take pity, but there was none, and for comforters, but I found none.) The sense of God's withholding his favour and help (My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me; why art thou so far from helping me? —) His charitable disposition and behaviour toward his persecutors (But as for me when they were sick, (or as the LXX, when they did trouble me, *Ἐν τῷ αὐτῶν παρενοχλεῖν μοι*) my cloathing was sackcloth, I humbled my self with fasting; and my prayer returned into mine own bosom; I behaved my self as though it had been my friend or brother; I bowed down heavily as one that mourneth for his mother.) Which passages and the like, how patly and punctually they do square to respective passages in the Gospels, I need not to shew; we do all, I suppose, well enough remember that both most doleful and comfortable history, to be able our selves to make the application.

But there are not only such oblique intimations, shrowded under the coverture of other Persons and Names, but direct and immediate predictions concerning the Messiah his being to suffer most clearly expressed. That whole famous Chapter in *Esay* (the 53d Chapter) doth most evidently and fully declare it, wherein the kind, manner, causes, ends and consequences of his sufferings, together with his behaviour under them, are graphically represented. His appearing meanness (He hath no form or comeliness, and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him.) The disgrace, contempt, repulses and rejection he underwent (He is despised, and rejected of men — we hid our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.) His afflicted state (He is a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.) The bitter and painful manner of his affliction (He was stricken; bore stripes, was wounded, was bruised.) His being accused, adjudged and condemned as a malefactor (He was taken from prison, and from judgment — he was numbred among the transgressors.) His consequent death (He poured out his soul unto death; He was cut out of the land of the living.) The design and end of his sufferings; they were appointed and inflicted by Divine providence for our sake, and in our stead; for the expiation of our sins, and our salvation (It pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief — when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin: — He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; — the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed; — Surely he hath born our griefs, and carried our sorrows — For the transgression of my people he was smitten; — The Lord hath laid on him the iniquities of us all.) His sustaining all this with a willing patience and meekness (He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before the shearer is dumb, so he opened not his mouth.) His charitable praying for his persecutors; so that may be understood (He made intercession for the transgressors.) The consequence and success of his sufferings (He shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand: He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied; by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; — and, I will divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong.) Which passages as they most exactly

exactly suited to *Jesus*, and might in a manner constitute an historical narration of what he did endure, together with the opinions taught in the *Gospel* concerning the intent and effect of his sufferings; so that they did (according to the intention of the Divine Spirit) relate to the *Messias*, may from several considerations be apparent: The context and coherence of all this passage with the precedent and subsequent passages, which plainly respect the *Messias*, and his times: *How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings?* — and, *Behold my servant shall deal prudently*, &c. are passages immediately going before, of which this 53d Chapter is but a continuation: and immediately after it followeth — *Sing O barren, thou that didst not bear*, &c. being a very elegant, and perspicuous description of the Church augmented by accession of the *Gentiles*, which was to be brought to pass by the *Messias*. The general scope of this whole prophecy argues the same; And the incongruity of this particular prediction to any other Person imaginable beside the *Messias* doth farther evince it; so high are the things which are attributed to the Suffering Person; as that he should bear the sins of all God's people and heal them; that he should by his knowledge justify many; that the pleasure of the Lord should prosper in his hand; that God would divide him a portion with the great; and that he should divide the spoil with the strong — The magnificency and importance of which things do well agree to the *Messias*, but not to any other person: whence if the ancient *Jews* had reason to believe a *Messias*, they had as much reason to apply this place to him as any other, and to acknowledge he was to be a great sufferer; and indeed divers of the ancient *Targumists* and most learned *Rabbins* did expound this place of the one *Messias* that was to come, as the *Pugio Fidei*, and other learned Writers do by several testimonies shew. This place also discovers the vanity of that figment devised by some later *Jews*, who to evade and oppose *Jesus* affirmed there was to be a double *Messias* (one who should be much afflicted, the other who should greatly prosper) since we may observe that here both great afflictions, and glorious performances are ascribed to the same person.

The same things are also by parts clearly predicted in other places of this Prophet, and in other Scriptures: By *Esay* again in the Chapter immediately foregoing: *Behold* (saith he) *my servant shall deal prudently; he shall be exalted and ex-* Isa. 52. 13, 14. *tolled, and be very high*, (there is God's servant (he that is in way of excellency such, that is, in this Prophet's style, the *Messias*) in his real glorious capacity; it follows, concerning his external appearance) *his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men*, — And again, (in the forty-ninth Chapter) *Thus saith the Lord, the redeemer of Israel, and his Holy one: To* Isa. 49. 7. *him whom man despiseth, to him whom the nation abhorreth, to a servant of Rulers, Kings shall see and arise, Princes also shall worship*: What can be more express and clear, than that the *Messias*, who should subject the world, with its sovereign powers, to the acknowledgment, and adoration of himself, was to be despised by men; to be detested by the *Jews*, and to appear in a servile and base condition? The same Prophet again brings him in speaking thus: *I gave my back to* Isa. 50. 6. *the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair; I hid not my face from shame and spitting*. His offending the *Jews* and aggravating their sins is also expressed by this same Prophet — And (saith he) *He shall be for a sanctuary, but* Isa. 8. 14. *for a stone of stumbling, and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel; for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem*. The opposition also he should receive is signified in the second Psalm — *The Kings of the earth set themselves,* Psalm. 2. 2. *and the Rulers take counsel together against the Lord, and against his anointed*. The Prophet *Zechary* doth also in several places very roundly express his sufferings: His low condition in those words: *Behold thy King cometh unto thee lowly* (*Pau-* Zech. 9. 9. *per*) *and riding upon an ass*: His manner of death in those: *Awake O sword against* Zech. 13. 7. *my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow* (saith the Lord of hosts) *smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered*: And again, *I will pour upon the house* Zech. 12. 10. *of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications, and they shall look upon me, whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn, &c.* The Prophet *Daniel* also in that place, from which probably the name *Messias* was taken, and which most expressly mentions him, saith, that *after three-* Dan. 9. *score and two weeks the Messias shall be cut off, but not for himself* — Now from

these passages of Scripture we may well say with our Lord ; *ὅτι ἔτι γέγραπται, ὅτι ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου πρέπει τοῦ παθεῖν τὸν θάνατον* *That thus it was written, and thus, according to the Prophets foretelling, it was to happen, that the Messiah should suffer ; suffer in a life of penury and contempt, in a death of shame and sorrow.*

That it was to be thus might also be inferred by reasons grounded on the qualities of the *Messias* his Person, and the nature of his performances, such as they are described in the Scripture. He was to be really and to appear plainly a person of most admirable virtue and good worth ; but never was or can there be any such (as even *Pagan* Philosophers, *Plato*, *Seneca*, and others have observed) without undergoing the trial of great affliction. He was to be an universal pattern to men of all sorts (especially to the greatest part, that is to the poor) of all righteousness ; to exemplify particularly the most difficult pieces of duty (Humility, Patience, Meekness, Charity, Self-denial, entire resignation to God's will) this he should not have opportunity or advantage of doing, if his condition had been high, wealthy, splendid and prosperous. He was to exercise pity and sympathy towards all mankind ; the which to do it was requisite he should feel the inconveniencies and miseries incident to mankind. He was to advance the repute of spiritual and eternal good ; and to depress the value of those corporeal and temporal things, which men vainly admire ; the most ready and compendious way of doing this was by an exemplary neglecting and refusing worldly enjoyments (the honours, profits and pleasures here.) He was by gentle and peaceable means to erect a spiritual Kingdom, to subdue the hearts and consciences of men to the love and obedience of God, to raise in men the hopes of future rewards and blessings in heaven ; to the accomplishment of which purposes temporal glory had been rather prejudicial, than conducive. He was to manage his great designs by means supernatural and divine, the which would be more conspicuous by the visible meanness and impotency of his state. He was to merit most highly from God for himself, and for men ; this he could not do so well, as in enduring for God's sake and ours the hardest things. He was to save men, and consequently to appease God's wrath, and satisfy his justice, by the expiation of our sins ; this required that he should suffer what we had deserved. But reasons of this kind I partly before touched, and shall hereafter have occasion to prosecute more fully in treating upon the article of our Saviour's passion.

Now that *Jesus* (our Lord) did most thoroughly correspond to whatever is in this kind declared concerning the *Messias*, we need not by relating minutely the known history of his life and death make out farther ; since the whole matter is palpably notorious, and no adversary will deny it. I conclude this Point with St. Peter's words (for the illustration and proof of which this discourse hath been made) *But those things which God before had shewed by the mouth of all his Prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled.*

And in Jesus Christ, &c.

S E R M O N XX. That *Jesus* is the True *Messias*.

JOHN V. 37.

And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath born witness of me.



JESUS, our Lord, here, and in the Context doth affirm, that Almighty God, his Father, had granted unto him several kinds of extraordinary attestation, sufficient to convince all well-disposed persons, unto whom they shall be discovered, that he truly was that *Messias*, whom God before all beginning of time, had designed, and frequently by his Prophets had promised to send for the reformation of the world, and salvation of mankind: to represent those several ways of divine attestation with some reflections on them, serving both to the confirmation of our faith, and improving our affection, and our reverence thereto, is my chief design at this time.

But *first* in preparation to what we shall say concerning those particulars, and for declaration of the divine wisdom in this manner of proceeding, I shall assign some reasons, why it was requisite, that such attestations should be afforded to our Lord.

1. The nature of the *Messias* his Office required such attestations; for since he was designed to the most eminent employment that ever was, or could be committed to any person; since he was to reveal things no less great and important, than new and strange; since he was to assume a most high authority unto himself; since he was to speak, and act all in the name of God; since also all men under great penalties were obliged to yield credit and obedience to him, there was great reason that God should appear to authorize him; that he should be able to produce God's hand and seal to his commission; for that otherwise he might have been suspected of imposture; his doctrine might have been rejected, his authority disclaimed, and his design frustrated, without great blame, or however without mens being convincible of blame: for well might the people suspect that person, who, professing to come in such a capacity an extraordinary *Agent* from heaven, brought no *Credentials* thence, (no evidence of God's especial favour and assistance;) well might they reject that new doctrine, which God vouchsafed not by any signal testimony to countenance; well might they disclaim that authority, which offering to introduce so great innovations (to repeal old laws, to cancel settled obligations, to abolish ancient customs; to enact new laws and rules, exacting obedience to them from all men) should not be able to exhibit its warrant, and shew its derivation from heaven: well might such peremptory assertions, and so confident pretences, without confirmations answerable in weight, beget even in wise men distrust and aversion. The reasonableness and excellency of his doctrine, the innocence and sanctity of his life, the wisdom and persuasiveness of his discourse would not, if nothing more divine should attend them, be thoroughly able to procure faith and submission; they would at best have made his precepts to pass for the devices of a wise man, or the dictates of a good Philosopher. They were therefore no unreasonable desires or demands (if they had proceeded from a good meaning, and had been joined with a docile and tractable

Deut 18. 19.
Acts 3. 23.

John 6. 27

tractable disposition) which the Jews did make to our Lord; *Master we would see a sign from thee; what sign therefore dost thou do, that we may see, and believe thee; what dost thou work? what sign dost thou shew to us, that thou doest things?* that is, how dost thou prove thy doctrine credible, or thy authority valid by God's testimony and warrant? This challenge our Lord himself acknowledged somewhat reasonable; for he not only asserts the truth of his doctrine, and validity of his commission by divine attestation (in words and works) not only exhorts them to credit him upon that account, but he also plainly signifies that his bare affirmation did not require credit, and that if he could produce no better proof, they were excusable for disbelieving him: *If (saith he) I witness of my self my witness is not true; not true, that is, not credible; or not so true, as to oblige to belief: and, If I do not the works of my father, (that is, works only imputable to God's extraordinary power,) believe me not, that is, I require no belief from you: Yea, he farther adds, If I had not done the works among them, which no man else had done; they (the incredulous people then) had not had any sin; that is, had not been culpable for unbelief. It was then from the nature of the Messias his Office, and undertaking very necessary, that he should have attestations of this kind; and our Lord himself, we see, declines not, but aggravateth his pretences with this necessity.*

2. The Effects which the Messias was to produce did require extraordinary attestations and assistances from God. He was to achieve exploits of the greatest difficulty conceivable; far surpassing all that ever was by any person undertaken in the world before; he was to vanquish all the powers, and to confound all the policies of hell; he was to subdue, and subjugate all the world; to make the greatest Princes to stoop, and to submit their Scepters to his will; to bring down the most haughty conceits, and to break down the most stubborn spirits, and to tame the wildest passions of men; he was to expell from their minds most deeply rooted prejudices, to banish from their practice most inveterate customs, to cross their most violent humours, to thwart their interests, to bear down their ambitions, to restrain their covetous desires, and their voluptuous appetites; he was to persuade a Doctrine, and to impose a Law very opposite to the natural inclinations, to the current notions, to the worldly advantages, the liberties, emoluments and enjoyments of all, or of most, or of many people; he was, in short, so to reform the world as in a manner quite to alter the whole frame of it, and all the course of affairs therein; things which surely it were a madness to enterprise, and an impossibility to accomplish without remarkable testimonies of the divine presence, especially aids of the divine power, and large influences of the divine spirit communicated to him; without (as S. Peter phraseth it) *God were with him; these things were not effectable by means natural and ordinary, by humane wit or eloquence, by good behaviour or example, by the bare reason or plausibility of doctrine, by the wise conduct or industrious management of the design; no, such means have by many experiments appeared insufficient to bring about much lesser matters; nothing under the wisdom of God directing, the power of God assisting, the authority of God establishing, and gracing his endeavours in an eminent and evident manner could enable the Messias to bring these mighty things to pass.*

3. We may farther consider, that the Christ was designed to present himself first to the Jews (in the first place imparting the declarations of Gods will, and gracious intentions to them, his ancient friends and favourites) that is to a people wholly addicted to this sort of proof, and incapable of conviction by any other; they did not, as did the Greeks, seek wisdom, but required a sign, as S. Paul observed of them; they were not so apt to enquire after the intrinick reasons of things, as to expect testimonies from heaven; nothing else was able to persuade them; so our Lord expressly saith; *Jesus said unto them, if you do not see signs and prodigies, you will no-wise believe:* In consequence of which disposition in them, we see by passages in the New Testament, that they expected and believed the Messias should come with such attestations, and performances; so their importunate demanding of signs upon all occasions from our Lord doth signify, and so those words in S. John do imply; *And many of the people believed on him, and said; when Christ cometh, will he do more miracles than these, which this man doeth?* where we may observe both their expectation of miraculous works from the Messias, and the efficacy

cacy which such works had upon them. The condition also of the *Gentiles* unto whom his design in the next place did extend, seemed to require the same proceedings: for all other methods of instruction and perswasion had before often been applied to them by Philosophers and by Politicians for instilling their notions, and recommending their laws; they had been so inured to subtile argumentations, and plausible discourses, that the bare use of them was not likely to have any extraordinary effect upon them: If the *Messias* therefore should bring no other confirmation with him unto them, he would seem to deserve no higher regard or credit, than other Doctors or Law-givers, which had appeared among them; and as easily would he be declined, and put off by them: whence reasonably it may be supposed, that for accommodation to the *genius*, and the capacities of those, upon whose hearts he was to make impressi^{on}, the *Messias* should come furnished with such special testimonials, and powers from God. Especially considering that,

4. It was agreeable to God's usual method of proceeding in cases resembling this, although much unequal thereto in weight, and consequence. There was never any more than ordinary discovery made to men by God, never any very considerable business managed by divine providence; never hardly any eminent Person appeared with a pretence of coming from God for the prosecution of such purposes, without God's visible interpos^{al} and abetment. This hath always been the authentick *Seal*, whereby he hath wonted to authorize the messengers sent from himself for transacting affairs of an unsual, and very weighty nature; whereby his true Ambassadors have been distinguishable from ordinary persons, or from deceitful pretenders, who have offered to impose their own devices upon men: to a person bringing with him this sort of assurance (except when his tale is evidently false and vain, or his design notoriously wicked and mischievous) God hath always required, that a ready credence and obedience should be yielded; taking it for a high affront to himself (no less, as *S. John* says, than *giving him the lye*) to disbelieve such a person, and for a heinous contumacy to disobey him: that it hath been God's ordinary method, the course of divine History shews. When God separated the *Patriarchs* for the preservation and propagation of his true Religion, he manifested an especial presence with them, frequently appearing to them, visibly assisting and blessing them in a more than ordinary manner, enduing them with a propheticall discretion, and foresight of things; when he would rescue the seed of those his friends from cruel oppression and hard slavery (designing also by them to maintain, and convey down the sincere way of piety) he imparted also to *Moses* the special instrument of those purposes, a power of doing wonders, thereby procuring authority to his person, and credit to his pretences. *Moses* did well perceive, and judge, that had he come without such attestation he should not have been received or regarded: But *Behold* (said he) *they will not believe me, nor hearken to my voice; for they will say, the Lord hath not appeared unto thee*: wherefore God furnished him with such a power of doing such things as should assure the truth of his message; the effect whereof is thus expressed; — *Israel saw that great works, which the Lord did upon the Egyptians; and the people feared the Lord, and believed the Lord, and his servant Moses*: To the promulgation of the Law, and establishment of that particular Covenant with the *Israelites*, God did also exhibit significations of his presence in a most evident and affecting manner: *Loe* (said God to *Moses*, expressing that matter, and its design) *I came unto thee in a thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak with thee, and believe thee for ever*. And in the whole conduct of that people toward *Canaan*, God for those ends vouchsafed by *Moses* to perform very great and prodigious things; which we may see reckoned up in the 78th and 105th *Psalms*, and in the 9th of *Nehemiah*. So also when God employed *Elias* to sustain the remainders of decayed piety in *Israel* against the countenance of power given to wickedness, and against the stream of popular use, he endued him with a liberal measure of his Spirit, and a power of doing great miracles: the like may be observed of all the *Prophets*, *Judges* and *Princes*, who upon special occasions were raised to perform considerable services for the glory of God, and the good of his People. This therefore being God's constant practice, it cannot but be well supposed, that in this case he would not withhold his attestation, but would afford it in a most plentiful measure to that person who was in dignity so far to excell all other his Envoys and Agents; whose undertaking should in importance so vastly transcend all others, that ever were set

Orig. cont.
Cell. 8.
(p. 408.)

John 6. 27.

1 John 5. 10.
John 3. 33.

Gen. 21. 22.

Exod. 4. 1.

Exod. 4. 5. 31.

Deut. 4. 34.

Exod. 4. 35. 39.

Exod. 19. 9.

Neh. 9. 13.

Psal. 78. 14.

105. 39.

Neh. 2. 15.

on foot in the world ; to him, who was to free not one small people only, but all mankind, not from a temporal slavery in *Egypt*, but from eternal misery in Hell ; to promulge not a pedagogy of ritual observances, but a law of spiritual righteousness ; to establish not a temporal Covenant for a little spot of earth, but an everlasting Testament for all the World, importing endless beatitude in heaven. God therefore surely would not balk his road upon such an occasion, nor refuse his especial testimonials to so great a Personage, and to so good a Design.

5. If we consider the general reasons assignable, why God hath been wont to proceed in this manner, or why he should use it upon any occasion, they are with strongest force applicable to this case. The most general reasons why God doth ever interpose extraordinarily, or produce works supernatural, are to assert palpably his own Divinity and Providence ; strongly to encourage devotion and piety in men : for he by suspending, or thwarting the course of nature plainly declareth himself the maker, and master thereof ; that he freely made the world, and freely doth uphold it ; that he hath not tied his own hands, nor confined his power within limits ; but is superiour to, and free from all laws, excepting those of indefectible holiness and goodness ; and consequently that all things do not proceed in a track of dead fatality. He thereby also assureth us, that he hath an especial regard unto, and a care over men, and wisely ordereth humane affairs by his providence, frequently (as wisdom directeth, and occasion requireth) interposing his hand for the succour, encouragement and reward of good men ; that therefore it is not vain to hope and trust in him, that prayers and devotions are available to procure good from him ; that repentance and obedience are no less profitable for us, than acceptable to him ; that also he freely and justly dispenseth recompences suitable to mens actions voluntarily performed ; that in fine, there is a foundation of Religion, and a ground of justice between God and man : these things are most evidently, and effectually demonstrated by extraordinary attestations ; and when therefore could they more seasonably be used, than when God by the *Messias* intended to call all the world to the acknowledgment and obedience of himself, to the practice of all piety and goodness, with assurances of fit reward, in regard to such practice ? If farther to excite mens attention and regard, to breed awe and reverence in mens minds, to confound the impudence, and to bend or break the obstinacy of men are main ends, and proper effects of such testimonies ; whether we consider the *Messias* his person, the nature of his undertaking, or the persons with whom he was to deal, 'tis plain (as we have shewed) that his business would best deserve, and most need them ; no dispensation could better deserve them for worth and consequence ; none could more need them for greatness and difficulty.

Such reasons may be assigned for the necessity and usefulness of divine attestations in this case : but in opposition to these discourses, and in derogation to this way of confirming any truth or authority, it may be said, that no such attestations can well serve to such purposes ; for that the like have been, and may be applied to the persuasion of error and impiety by *false Prophets*, and *Antichrists* ; by

Deut. 13. 30.
Matt. 24. 24.
2 Thes. 2. 2.

Πῶς ἐν ἐξέτασιν ἀπὸ τοῦ αὐτοῦ ἐργῶν
τὸ μὲν δίδω, οὗς δὲ πολλὰς ἡγεῖσθαι ;
Cell. apud Orig. lib. 2. (p. 89.)

Siquidem edicens multos venturos, &
signa facturos, temerariam planè signorum,
& virtutum fidem offendit, ut apud Pseudo-
Christianos facillimarum. Text. in Marc.
3. 2.

Aug. de Civ.
Dei 10. 16.

limits of whose power in working so, it is hard for us to discern or define ; how can we be assured, that what is done in this kind, doth not proceed from them, but from a virtue divine ? how can it be a certain and convincing argument of truth ? may we not here object that of *Tertullian*, saying, that *Our Lord pronouncing that many Impostors should come, and do miracles, shewed thereby the faith grounded on miracles to be temerarious.*

To this suggestion we may in general return, that seeing the doing such things is the chief and most effectual way, whereby God beyond the resistance of doubt or dispute can in some cases assure us concerning his mind and will, (whereby he can bestow honour and credit to any instrument employed by him, to any revelation proceeding from him) it cannot but (notwithstanding that cross instance) reasonably be supposed, that God however doth reserve the power thereof in some eminent

eminent and discernable manner peculiar to himself, for the promoting his own service. That also at least God, being the author and establisher of nature, and the continual sustainer of it by his free providence, it is not likely, that he will suffer the laws and course thereof to be much violated, except upon occasions very considerable, and for very good purposes; no inferior cause being able to determine his voluntary influence, or providential concurrence to the accomplishment of designs contrary to his will and purpose. That also the natural goodness and justice of God, the constant care and providence he exerciseth over this world, the particular relations he beareth toward mankind (as the Maker and Father, the Lord and Governour thereof) the honour and interest of truth, of religion, of virtue (whose Protector and Patron he is, and declareth himself) the necessary regard he also, in connexion with the rest, doth bear to his own honour and glory do all conspire to persuade, that God will never endure such things to be performed in any high manner, so that good and well-meaning people shall be very liable to be thereby extremely seduced into error; or that himself shall be intolerably mocked by the enemies of his glory, and our good. This may serve to render it probable, that the objection is capable of a solution.

But to answer more distinctly and particularly; we do grant, that God sometimes for special reasons (for wise probation of some persons, and just punishment of others; for to approve some mens sincerity and constancy, to detect other mens naughtiness and vanity) may permit such things (in some manner, in some degree such) to be effected by the influence of wicked spirits, or the fraud of wicked men; yet then it will never be very hard for moderately wise, and well disposed persons to distinguish such feats from those acts, which issue from the positive and direct efficacy of God, for authorizing his messengers, and confirming his truth: We may usually discern them to come from bad causes by their nature; we may certainly detect them by their design and influence.

There are some things so great, that it is not reasonable to conceive, that any such inferior power is able to do them; or if they were able, that God should permit their power actually to be exerted, and to succeed in doing them: such is the making any general or grand alteration in the course of nature; which being God's great work and establishment, the which he doth (as the Prophets speak) govern by a standing law, and preserve according to a perpetual decree, which cannot pass; yea according to a *Covenant*, which his faithfulness is in a manner engaged to observe; it is not probable that he will suffer any creature to disturb or disorder: this experience well confirmeth, for had bad spirits a power of crossing nature so, such is their malice and proneness to do mischief, that the world would soon have been turned by them into confusion and ruin; that all things therein go in so kindly and steady a course, is an argument of their small power and influence upon things; that God holdeth the reins fast in his own hands, reserving to himself only as Lord paramount of Nature a power to dispense with any of its main laws; that it is *he alone, who* (as the Psalmist saith) *doeth great wonders*. There are also some things, which although not of so great and general consequence, are yet of so difficult performance, that it is improbable any creature should effect them; such was the turning of dust into lice, which the Devils could not enable the *Egyptian* forcerers to perform; to prepare or dispose so much dust for the reception of souls, and to furnish so many souls for the dust did it seem exceed their ability; whence they were forced to confess of that miracle done by *Moses*; *This is the finger of God*.

There are also things so good, and so beneficial to mankind, that evil spirits may be deemed unable to do them (God the fountain of good retaining them as instruments of his glory, and arguments of his goodness, to his own dispensation) which also we may presume they would not be willing, were they able, to perform, it being against their disposition, or their interest to do it; such are to dispossess Devils (that is to divide and weaken their own Kingdom) to discover moral truths of consequence (that is to drive men from themselves) and even to free men from grievous diseases (that is, to starve their own *ἐμπόρευμα*, and malignity) as is implied in that passage of the Gospel; where it is said, *These are not the words of him that hath a devil; can a devil open the eyes of the blind?* Extraordinary works then if they are very great, very hard, very good, do thence indicate

1 Cor. 11. 19.
2 Theff. 2. 9,
11.
Deut. 13. 1,
&c.
Matt. 24. 24.
Apoc. 13. 13.

Jer. 5. 22.
33. 25.
Psal. 148. 26.

Psal. 136. 4.
72. 18. 86. 10.
Deut. 3. 24.

Exod. 8. 19.

John 10. 21.

indicate their cause to be divine : wicked spirits deal only in petty, low and useless prestigiatory tricks, of small consequence, and no benefit.

But there are farther some things infallibly signifying a divine virtue, peculiar to God, and (either by their nature, or from the decree of God) incommunicable to any creature, otherwise than as acted by God, or immediately depending on him ; such are, the knowledge of future contingent events declared by predicting, or presignifying them, according to that of the Prophet ; *Shew* (said he, in way of challenge, and conviction to the objects of Heathen worship) *the things to come, that we may know ye are Gods* ; such is the discerning mens secret thoughts and intentions, the which God assumeth as proper to himself ; *I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins* ; so that καρδιολογίας is a characteristical attribute, or title proper to him. Such is the restitution of men from a state of death to life ; a work not only in it self most difficult, in respect to the ordinary rule of nature, which it transgresseth, but impossible to any mere creature, without God's aid ; for that the souls of men when they die return into God's hand, and enter into a state determined by his high sentence ; whence no creature can fetch them down, or raise them up ; most impossible also because God by especial decree hath reserved the power of doing it appropriate to himself ; the power of life and death being his prerogative, who saith, *I am he, and there is no God * beside me ; I kill, and I make alive*, of whom again it is said, *The Lord killeth, and maketh alive ; he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up* : He it is, that in his hand doth hold the keys of hell, and of death. The performing things also by mere word and will, without application of other force, or any preparation of the subject matter (being equivalent to the work of creation) is peculiar unto God, the author of all being, or to such as act by the immediate help of his infinite power.

We may add, that there also seem to be some things, which infernal spirits (who continue under restraint and command, within a great awe and dread of their Judge) dare not so much as pretend to, or counterfeit ; knowing that as presently they shall be checked in their attempt, so they shall be grievously chastised for their presumptions ; such may be the assuming to themselves the special names of God, the directly withstanding the extraordinary messengers of God, and the like.

So even considering the very nature of strange works may enable us to distinguish them ; but the end and design of such works, together with the influences and effects of them will farther ascertain us of their original : If they are done to abett any gross error, or to promote any mischievous purpose ; if they manifestly do seduce to Apostacy from God, or goodness, if they naturally tend to the production of impiety, iniquity or impurity ; if they do necessarily produce any great disorder or disturbance in the world, assuredly hell is the source of them ; they derive from him, whose Kingdom and interest they advance ; by their fruits we may know the tree from which they grow. If also they discover ostentation and vanity in the actors, or serve only to gratify idle humour and curiosity in the spectators of them, tending otherwise to no good purpose ; it is easy to collect whence they spring ; that they come from the father both of mischiefs and vanities, who not only delights to abuse us with villanies, but to amuse us also with trifles, and fond superstitions.

Ὅτι τὸ ἐν αἰγύπτῳ δυνάμεις ἡ τοῦ θεοῦ ἐν αἰγύπτῳ ἐπιδεικνύμεν τῇ ἐν τῷ Μωϋσῇ παρὰ τὸν ἑαυτοῦ, ἀλλὰ τὸ τέλος διέλεγε τὰ μὲν τοῦ Αἰγυπτίου ὄντα μαγίας, ὡς Orig. in Cell. 2.

As (saith Origen) the power of those enchantments in Egypt was not (in it self) like to that admirable power by God's grace vouchsafed to Moses ; so the end did convince those Egyptian feats to be jugglings, those of Moses to be divine. The portentous things done by the energy of Satan are (as S. Paul call-

2 Theff. 2. 9. eth them) τέχνη ψεύδους, either false prodigies, or prodigies abetting falshood and vanity.

But the works of the most wise and good God, as they are commonly works of wonderful majesty and grandeur, incomparable and inimitable for difficulty ; so they always are holy, always useful ; they ever aim at good ends, and produce wholesome fruits ; hence we may discern them, and hence we are obliged to acknowledge them ; they afford us ground to say with the Psalmist ; *Unto thee, O Lord, we do give thanks, for that thy name is near, thy wondrous works declare.* Such works as they can only be effects of God's power, so they are arguments of his

Psalm 75. 1.

his truth ; for that he cannot lend his hand, for that he will not prostitute his assistance to the maintenance of any thing, which is not perfectly true and good ; he will *not so tempt any man* into error ; *If I by the finger of God cast out Devils,* James 1. 13; *then indeed is the Kingdom of God come unto you* (that is, If I perform works by the divine power, then assuredly is my doctrine true) was an irrefragable argument. Luke 11. 20.

We may also observe, that those wicked spirits are themselves apprehensive how easily their feats are distinguished from the works of God ; for, hence it seems they chose to utter them clancularly, in obscure corners, in blind times, among barbarous and silly people ; judging that persons of any wisdom or goodness will be soon able to detect them, and ready to explode them ; a little light dazzles *the powers of darkness*, and scares away these spectres ; a little goodness mates their force, enfeebleth and dishearteneth them.

We may also add, that the *Messias* his works by a peculiar character should be manifestly distinguishable from such as proceeded from infernal powers ; for that it should be his business to impugn, defeat and overthrow the Devil's kingdom ; all the falsehoods and superstitions, all the immoralities and impieties which it consisted in, or which supported it : to this end all his doctrine, practice and performances would conspiringly tend, that *Satan like lightning should be thrown down* Luke 10. 18; *from heaven* ; which most evidently would evince, that what he should do should only come from heaven.

Having thus shewed reasons why, and signified to what purposes the *Messias* was to receive special testimonies from God ; let us now survey those, which were indeed by him exhibited to *Jesus* our Lord. There is indeed no kind or degree of attestation needful or proper, which hath not been largely from heaven afforded to him. God (so our Lord argueth) is in his own nature invisible, and indiscernable to any sense of ours ; neither could we endure the lustre of his immediate presence, (*No man ever saw God, or can see him ; there shall no man see him, and live.*) It must be therefore by mediation of signs, and works supernatural ; the causing of which can only be imputed to him, as beyond the power of any creature to effect, or counterfeit ; that he can assuredly signify his mind unto us ; such only in approbation of any Person, Law or Doctrine can be expected from him ; and such in divers kinds, and in great measures God hath, we say, *furnished for the authorizing Jesus.* Joh. 5. 36, 37; 1 Tim. 6. 16; Exod. 33. 29.

1. God did attest to him long before his coming into the world, by presignifying and predicting concerning him, at several times, in several ways, by several persons (even by all the Prophets, and eminent Persons among his People of old) many things, even all things considerable about him ; in exact congruity to the circumstances of his coming into the world (the *time* when, the *place* where, the *Family* whence, the *manner* how, the *condition* in which he was born) to the qualities of his Person, to the doctrine and law which he published, to all his undertakings, and performances, and sufferings, and to the successes consequent upon what he did. (This is a matter of very large consideration ; which otherwhile we have insisted largely upon, and therefore shall now wave enlargement on it.)

2. God did in attestation to him immediately send before his face as his herald and harbinger a Prophet (or one for his admirable wisdom and sanctity of life somewhat *more than a Prophet*) who indeed without doing any miracle, by the prodigious integrity and strictness of his life, by the wonderful efficacy of his doctrine and discourse procured unto himself a reputation equalling or exceeding that of any former Prophet ; (whom even *Josephus*, an indifferent Historian, reporteth a man of singular goodness, and great authority) to predispose the minds of men to receive him ; by converting men to a serious reflection upon their lives, and amendment of their manners to *prepare his way* ; as also to point him out, to foretel of him as presently coming, to testify of him as being come. This was he, to whom it well agreed, and who plainly did assume to himself that which was written by *Malachy* : *Behold I send my angel before thy face, who shall prepare thy way before thee ; of whom Esay* (John himself being the avoucher and interpreter) said, *The voice of one crying in the wilderness, prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight ; who was, as Malachy did again signify, to come in the spirit and power of Elias, to convert the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just ; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.* Mal. 1. 3; Matt. 11. 10; Isa. 40. 3; John 1. 23; Mal. 4. 6; Luke 1. 17; John 1. 26; Lord. 15. 29, 34.

Matt. 3. 11.
Luke 3. 16. *Lord.* This most extraordinary and excellent Person did at several times and occasions attest unto *Jesus*, not only that he was incomparably for the dignity of his Person, and worth of his performances to be preferred before himself, and consequently before all other Prophets, but that he was the *very Christ*, the *lamb of God*, the *Son of God*, the *Saviour of the world* : they sent to *John*, saith the Text, and he bare witness of the truth. God by him also foretold divers things concerning our Lord, which did really come to pass ; as those words, uttered occasionally by many persons, do imply : *John indeed did do no miracle ; but all things which John spake of this man were true.*

3. God attested unto our Lord by visible apparitions from heaven, at several times, in fit seasons, made in the sight and presence of very good witnesses : Angels appearing warned his good Father, and blessed Mother, concerning the time and manner of his coming into the world ; Angels again appearing uttered tidings of his birth, joined with acclamations of praise to God, and gratulations of joy to men ; Angels were vigilant for his safety, ministered unto him in his temptations and needs, assisted and comforted him in the agonies of his passion, waited upon him at his resurrection ; an extraordinary Star (like that of the morning before the Sun) officiously did usher him into the world ; at his baptism the Holy Ghost (in the symbolical figure of a Dove) appeared *descending, and resting upon him*, in the presence of S. *John the Baptist* (that most just and holy person, so taken and acknowledged by all men, even by his enemies and murderers ; and a most competent witness, as who dared with utmost peril before the greatest persons to assert the truth,) *He testified thereof, and said, I saw the spirit of God descending from heaven as a Dove, and resting upon him.* Moses and Elias also (those most eminent instruments of God, and illustrious representatives of the *Messias*) did from heaven in a most glorious and splendid manner attend upon him, in the presence of three most credible witnesses, *Peter, James and John* the Apostles ; one of whom doth himself thus, with the due confidence of an eye-witness, report the fact : *For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and presence of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were spectators of his Majesty — being with him in the holy mountain.*

4. God also by vocal attestation did expressly at several times own and approve *Jesus* : at his Baptism in the audience of S. *John the Baptist*, and others present there : when, *Behold there was a voice from heaven saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased* ; the like heavenly voice was heard at the Transfiguration ; *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear him* : So the Gospels report it ; and thus S. *Peter* himself, a more immediate witness and attendant there : *He received from God the Father honour and glory, a voice being brought unto him from the magnificent glory ; This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased ; and this voice, which came from heaven we heard, being with him in the holy mount.* Again, a little before his Death, in presence of a multitude, upon *Jesus* his prayer, that God would by him glorify his name, an audible return was made from heaven : *There came (saith the Text) a voice from heaven, (saying) I have both glorified it, and will again glorify it.*

5. God attested to our Lord in that he was endued with a power constantly resident in him, of performing miraculous works, for nature and quality such, as could only proceed from a most divine power ; not only thwarting the course of nature, but transcending the strength of any creature, and especially contrary to what any evil creature could, or would perform ; this was a testimony beyond any humane testimony, and which our Lord insisted upon as such : *I (saith he) have a greater testimony than that of John, for the works, which the Father hath granted me, that I should perform them, those very works, which I do, they testify about me, that the Father hath sent me.*

Works indeed he performed of a stupendious greatness and difficulty ; all the creatures (the most unruly and boisterous, the most malignant and rebellious) beside their natures, and against their wills, did obey his commands : In a tempest *he arose and rebuked the winds, and the sea, and there became a great calm, so that men did marvel, saying, what manner of man is this, for even the winds and the sea obey him ?* The sea stood firm for him and S. *Peter* to walk upon ; he turned water into good wine ; he unconceivably so improved a few loaves and little fishes as to feed and satisfy multitudes, leaving more behind than there was at first ; he

cured

cured the most incurable diseases, inveterate palsies, fluxes of blood, and lepro-^{Joh. 4. 52. 9. i.}
sies; he restored senses, and limbs wanting from the birth, or for a long time; ^{Mat. 8. 6. 9. 2.}
innumerable persons blind, deaf, dumb, lame and maimed he restored to the use ^{20. 32. 8. 3.}
of their faculties, and members respectively, without any medicinal applications, ^{12. 12. 15. 33.}
or any natural means conducive to those purposes; he restored lunatick persons ^{20. 34.}
to their right wits, and dispossessed evil spirits, they not daring to disobey him, ^{Mar. 9. 5.}
and acknowledging his uncontrollable authority: *They were* (saith the Text) ^{Mat. 17. 5.}
mazed, insomuch that they questioned among themselves saying; What thing is this? ^{Mar. 1. 27.}
what new doctrine is this; for with authority he commandeth even the unclean spirits,
and they do obey him. These were indeed works of excessive grandeur and diffi-
culty, but he did others far more great and hard, and these were greater for the
manner of performing them, than in their own nature; he did other acts so great,
that they were only to be done by an infinite power; and most of these he per-
formed in a manner which argued omnipotency present with the doer.

Works proper unto God he did many; such was discerning the thoughts, rea-^{Mat. 9. 4.}
sonings, opinions and purposes of men, however concealed or disguised, where-^{12. 25. 22. 18.}
of we have many instances; and his intimate acquaintance, S. *John*, testifies of ^{Luke 11. 17.}
him generally, saying, *He needed not that any should witness about a man, for he* ^{6. 8.}
knew himself what was in man. Such was also to forgive sins, (a privilege only ^{John 2. 25.}
belonging to the supreme Lord, and Law-giver, against whom sin is committed)
the which he assumed to himself, and irreprovably maintain'd it by exerting a
power equivalent thereto: *For whether* (said he) *is it easier to say, thy sins be* ^{Mat. 9. 5.}
forgiven thee, or to say, arise and walk? but that you may know, that the son of man
bath power on earth to forgive sins: Then saith he to the sick of the palsy, Arise, take
up thy bed, and go to thine house; and he arose, and departed to his house: Such it was ^{Mat. 17. 12.}
likewise to foretell future contingencies; this he often did; as concerning his own ^{16. 21. 20. 17.}
passion and resurrection, with all the circumstances of them; particularly the ^{24. 2. 9. 10.}
treason of *Judas*; (*He knew, saith S. John, from the beginning who they were that* ^{17. 28. 20.}
did not believe, and who it was that should betray him.) Concerning S. *Peter's* ^{Luke 24. 27.}
lapse, repentance and suffering; concerning the destruction of *Jerusalem*, and ut-^{29.}
ter demolition of the temple; concerning the persecutions which his Disciples ^{John 6. 64.}
should undergo; concerning the communication of the Holy Ghost after his de-
cease, and the propagation of the Gospel in the world: Such was the foundation of
the Church upon a rock, against which *the gates of hell should not prevail*: Such again ^{Chryl. Tom. 6.}
it was to raise the dead, which he often performed; he raised the Ruler's daugh-^{Or. 61. p. 634.}
ter, and the Widow's son of *Naim*, and his friend *Lazarus*, and *The dead are* ^{Mat. 9. 25.}
raised, is reckoned among the ordinary miracles done by him, in the answer to S. ^{Luke 7. 12.}
John the Baptist's disciples: These were acts of divine power, which no creature, ^{Joh. 11. 1. &c.}
unassisted by God, could perform.

And considering the manner of performance such were both these, and most of
the rest; they in that respect emulating God's inimitable work of creation, and in
a manner seeming to exceed it; for that it seemeth harder to produce things out
of matter indisposed and repugnant, than to bring them out of mere nothing; as
God by mere word and will created things, when *He spake, and it was done, he* ^{Psal. 33. 9.}
commanded and it stood fast; so did *Jesus* in like manner by the efficacy of his com-
mand, or by actions equipollent thereto, without predisposing the subjacent mat-
ter, or using any natural instrument, accomplish his great and strange works: *He* ^{Mark 4. 39.}
rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, peace, be still; so he quelled the storm: *I will,* ^{Luke 5. 12.}
be thou cleansed; so he cured the leper: *Young man, I say unto thee, arise*; so he ^{7. 14.}
revived the widow's son: *O woman, great is thy faith, be it unto thee, as thou de-* ^{Mat. 15. 28.}
sest; so he cured the *Canaanitish* womans possessed daughter: *He cried out, Laza-*
rus, come forth; ^{John 11. 43.}
ἐγὼ λέγω τέλει σου, so the dead man heard his voice, and presently ^{Mark 7. 34.}
came forth out of the grave: He said *ephatha, be opened*, to the deaf man's ears;
they immediately heard, and obeyed: he said but one word, *ἀνάστα*, see again,
to the blind man; ^{Luke 4. 39.}
καὶ παρρησια ἀνάστα, and without more ado he saw again: he did ^{Mat. 9. 25.}
but *chide the great fever*, with which S. *Peter's* mother-in-law was troubled, and it ^{9. 29.}
left her: he did but take the Ruler's daughter by the hand, and *the girl revived, and* ^{Luk. 8. 43. 47.}
rose up: he only touched the two blind mens eyes, and so *their sight was restored*: ^{Mat. 9. 22.}
the woman, who had a flux of blood for twelve years, did but touch him, ^{καὶ ἰδὼν}
παρρησια, and she thereupon *ipso facto*, instantly was healed: Yea multitudes of sick
persons together did only endeavour to touch the hem of his garment, and as many ^{Mat. 14. 39.}

Luke 6. 19. *as touched it were healed; there went virtue out of him, and he healed them all.* When Chryſt. in he used any thing like means, he (as S. Chrysostome observeth) proceeded in ways 1 Cor. 1. 22. not only preternatural, but contrary to nature; as when he cured the blind man in S. John's Gospel, anointing his eyes with clay and spittle: *καὶ πλῆθος τῶν πειρασθῶν, ἀνέλας·* by a thing apt to increase (or strengthen) blindness he took it away. So great in nature, so high for manner of performance were the works of our Lord; they plainly were either the works, or they were done in the way of omnipotency.

They had also no less of goodness, than of greatness, divine; they were all of them plainly works of piety, or works of charity and pity; of a holy nature, and beneficial use; they were generally performed upon evidently reasonable occasions, or needs; for the succour and comfort of persons in some want or distress; or for instruction of the minds, and reformation of the manners of men; for healing the sick, feeding the hungry, easing the afflicted, restoring men to their senses, freeing them from the Devil's tyranny; for helping men in disappointment and need, or for encouraging kindness and good neighbourhood among people (to which purpose his first miracle done at Cana served) for instilling or impressing some wholesome truth, as when the fig-tree withered at his command; for encouraging dutiful submission to Governours; as when the fish was brought up with a piece of money in his mouth, furnishing him and S. Peter to pay tribute: In fine, the nature and importance of his works, S. Peter thus well expressed, saying of him; *Ὁς ἀπ᾿ ἀρχῆς διεργάζετο, Who went about doing good (or benefiting men) and healing all that were oppressed by the Devil; for God was with him:* and the Evangelist thus; *Jesus went about all the cities, teaching in their Synagogues, and preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom, and healing every sickness, and every disease among the people.*

Considering which things, we may well discern by what power, and to what purpose Jesus did perform his admirable works; and may repel from our hearts all the cavils or calumnies forged by malicious and vain wits (such as those of Celsus and Julian) in derogation to them; we may particularly perceive how impudent-

Ἐργασάμενος παρ' οὗ ἐξ ἑνὸς χειρὸν ἐδὲν ἀποκρίσεις ἀξίον. εἰ μὴ πᾶσι οἰεται τὸς κυλλὰς, καὶ κατὰ ἰατρὰς καὶ τὸς δαιμονώδεις ἐξορκίζειν ἐν Βεθσαιδᾶ, καὶ ἐν Βηθανίᾳ. ταῖς κόμῃσι δὲ μέγιστον ἔργον εἶναι.
Cyr. adv. Jul. lib. 6.

ly false that suggestion was of the Apostate Emperor: who said that Jesus, while he lived did nothing worthy bearing, except one suppose to heal cripples, and blind folk, and to exercise Demoniacks in the villages Bethsaida, and Bethany, to be great works: in opposition to which kind of suggestion, and for abundant confirmation of our purpose, we may consider

some advantageous circumstances, and concomitances of our Lord's performances.

They were, we may observe, not some few things done at one time, or in one place, among friends and partisans; but innumerable many and frequent (a world of things, more than well could be recited, as Saint John telleth us) done thro' a long course of time (for some years together) in several places, before all sorts of people, many of them very ill affected towards him. They were not done clandestinely in a blind corner, among rude and simple people, but openly and visibly every where about Judaea, the most lightsome place for knowledge and goodness in the world; where the best worship of God most flourished, and all Diabolical impostures were most detested, in the places there most publick and conspicuous; so he could affirm and admonish them; *I spake freely to the world, I always taught in the synagogues, and in the temple, where the Jews from all places resort, and in secret have I done nothing:* they were done so apparently, that the people generally saw them, and acknowledged them; that scarce any man could be ignorant of them; that the most learned and considerate men took it for granted, that they were done; that adversaries could not deny the performance of them, although out of envy and ill-will they were ready to impute it to the worst causes devisable; that many of all sorts were convinced, and divers converted by them: as for the people, *Great multitudes* (saith S. Matthew, one present, and a follower of our Lord) *came unto him, having with them those that were lame, blind, dumb, maimed, and many others; and cast them down at Jesus his feet, and he healed them; insomuch that the multitude wondred, when they saw the dumb to speak, the maimed to be whole, the lame to walk, and the blind to see, and they glorified the God of Israel:* and, *The people marvelled, saying, It was never so seen in Israel; but the Pharisees said, He casteth*

casteth out Devils by the Prince of the Devils: the matter of fact they could not offer, against conviction of sense, to question, but malice prompted perversly; and foolishly to assign a bad cause thereof; the matter was so notorious, that S. Peter could thus confidently appeal to the whole Nation: *Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved (or demonstrated) unto you by miracles, and wonders, and signs which God did by him in the midst of you; as you yourselves know.* The adversaries (such whom superstitious prejudices, obstinate humours, or corrupt affections, envy, pride, ambition, avarice, or the like, had made adversaries to him) did not only see the thing, but were affrighted with its consequence: *The chief Priests (’tis said) and the Pharisees gathered a counsel together, and said; What shall we do? for this man doeth many wonders: if we let him alone, all men will believe on him: Yes indeed notwithstanding all this watchful caution, and fine policy of theirs, notwithstanding all the opposition and discouragement they could interpose, all their struglings to smother his credit and doctrine, many were in their hearts convinced, even divers of such as were unwilling to believe; and ashamed, or afraid to avow their perswasion: Also (’tis said again) of the rulers many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess it, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: Nicodemus, an honest and ingenuous person, a man of honour, (but somewhat wary and timorous) came secretly, and in the name (it seemeth) of many persons alike disposed with himself thus spake: Rabbi, we know that thou hast come a teacher from God: for no man can do those things which thou doest, except God be with him: As for the generality of the people (the most concerned in such cases as to point of honour and interest, and thence the most impartial and sincere party) they following their senses were greatly affected, and astonished with what he did; taking him for a very extraordinary person; some in a gross and confused manner, others in a more distinct way of belief: Some said he was John the Baptist, others that he was Elias; others Jeremias or one of the ancient Prophets risen up again; but many of the people (more fully and exactly) believed on him, saying, when Christ cometh will he do more miracles than this man hath done?*

We may also observe, that Jesus did not affect to perform wonders out of vanity, or to humour mens curiosity, but always upon inducements of piety and charity: most of them were performed occasionally at the desire of men, suggested by their needs; and all of them for their edification or comfort: that he therefore did not seek by them to acquire reputation, or applause to himself; nor by them designed to advance any private interest of his own, but singly aimed at the promotion of God’s glory in them all: that in effect no secular advantage of dignity, or wealth, or pleasure did from them accrue to himself; but rather disgrace and obliquy, hatred and enmity, trouble and pain did from them befall him; all the glory of them purely coming to God, and all the benefit to men. As he charged his disciples, so he practised himself, doing all *gratis*, and freely without expecting or accepting any requital. He often studiously concealed his miracles, forbidding those who were concerned in them, or conscious of them to publish them; so striving to decline, or to stifle the honour, naturally emergent from them. When it was necessary or expedient they should appear, he disclaimed being the principal author of them, referring and ascribing them to God: *I can (said he) do nothing of my self; and, The word that I speak to you I speak not of my self; but the Father who abides in me, he doeth the works: and, I seek not mine own glory; I receive not glory of men; thus he professed, and so he practised: consequently the effect was, that (as it is expressed in the Gospels) Fear, or a pious reverence, did seize all men; and they glorified God, saying that a great Prophet is risen up among us, and that God hath visited his people: All the people seeing it gave praise to God: All men were amazed at the mighty power (or majesty) of God; when the multitude saw it, they marvelled; and glorified God, which had given such power unto men; And doth not so much glory from his performances resulting to God, so good an influence upon the hearts of men, evidently shew, whence the power effecting them was derived? would the Devil be such an instrument of God’s praise?*

We may also with S. Irenæus observe, that Jesus in performing his cures, and other miraculous works, did never use any profane, silly, phantastick ceremonies; any muttering of barbarous names, or insignificant phrases; any invocation of spirits,

spirits, or inferior powers; any preparatory purgations, any misterious circumstances of proceeding, apt to amuse people; any such unaccountable methods or instruments, as *Magicians, Incanters, Diviners, circulatorious Juglers*, and such emissaries of the Devil, or self-seeking *Impostors* are wont to use; but did proceed altogether in a most innocent, simple and grave manner, with a majestick authority and clear sincerity, becoming such an Agent of God, as he professed himself to be.

That also the whole tenour of his proceedings was directly levelled against the Kingdom of darkness; against all the impiety, all the malice, all the filthiness, and all the fallacy thereof; at the casting wicked and impure spirits not only from the bodies, but out of the souls of men; causing men not only to detest and defy them, but to loath their qualities, and to eschew their works; that is that binding, disarming, rifling and dispossessing *the strong one*, which *Jesus* alledged as an infallible argument; that he was not only no friend, but a mighty enemy to the infernal powers; an enemy not only in disposition and design quite contrary, but in virtue and force highly superior to them: That we should worship God alone with most hearty reverence and love; that we should bear the same clear good will to all men, as we do to our selves; that we should be strictly just, veracious and sincere in our words and dealings, meek and humble in our spirits, pure and sober in all our enjoyments (things perfectly opposite to the temper and interests of hell) were things, which as our Lord constantly in his doctrine did inculcate, so he countenanced and furthered them by his works; from whence assuredly we may collect, that they came from heaven, and were intended for the promoting God's service: Hell would never contribute so much to its own disgrace and disadvantage, would never so industriously concur to defeat and destroy it self; God plainly reaped the benefit by *Jesus* his works, he therefore certainly did plant them, and bless them.

Luke 11. 21.
Matt. 12. 29.

Tertull. Apol.
23.

Upon these considerations it appeareth sufficiently, that in correspondence to the reason and exigency of the case, our Lord did perform innumerable works, which had impressed on them the truest and highest characters of Divinity; the most peculiar grandeur, and perfectest goodness; the purest holiness of design, and the beneficial tendency proper to the works issuing from divine power; so that supposing God should send the *Messias* into the world, or any great Ambassador from himself, he could scarce possibly, he should not at least, all things considered, need to furnish him with more convincing attestations, than he hath exhibited to our Lord. Whence we may well apprehend the validity of that argument, which our Lord himself suggested for assurance of *S. John the Baptist* in his opinion concerning him, or rather for the satisfaction of *S. John's Disciples*; when *John* sent two of his Disciples, with this inquiry, *Art thou he, or look we for another?* *Jesus* thus replied: *Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen, and heard; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the Gospel is preached; And blessed is he, who ever shall not be offended in me.*

Matt. 11. 5.
Luke 7. 22.

6. God most signally did attest to our Lord by miraculously raising him from the dead; or in that by a divine power he raised up himself from the grave; which work for the singular greatness, and high consequence thereof, together with the certain evidence that it was really performed, might alone suffice to confirm the verity of all our Lord's pretences; [that he was the true *Messias*, the *Son of God*, the *Saviour of the World*, the *Lord of all things*, the *Judge of all the World*;] most efficaciously to evince and persuade the most eminent and important parts of his doctrine (the immortality of our souls, the resurrection of our bodies, the just and wise providence of God over men, the dispensation of rewards and punishments hereafter, answerable to mens conversation and practice in this life.) This indeed is the point, which invincibly guardeth and fortifieth all other testimonies; but it is so pregnant of considerations belonging to it, that it deserveth more time and room than we now can yield it; wherefore we chuse rather at present to pass it over than slightly to touch it, reserving it for a peculiar subject of discourse.

7. A farther attestation was given to our Lord by the power of doing miracles in his name imparted to his Disciples; who by him were appointed and authorized to prosecute the great design commenced by himself: not only his Person, but even his Name did great wonders; it cured diseases, it cast out Devils,
it

it surmounted nature, and subdued hell : whereby he indeed appears for especial favour with God, personal excellency, dignity of office, importance of undertaking incomparably to have surpassed all former Prophets, and commissioners of God, by whose ministry any Law, Covenant or Doctrine hath been conveyed to men ; never by delegation, or independence upon any other person, never in any other person's Name were such works done. To the XII Apostles at their first mission he among other instructions enjoined thus ; *Cure the sick, cleanse the lepers, cast out Devils ; Ye have freely received, freely give* : To the LXX Disciples, sent out by himself to instill the rudiments of his doctrine, and to admonish people of his approach, he gave this commission and charge ; *In any city, into which you enter, heal those which are sick therein ; and say unto them, the kingdom of heaven is come near unto you* — he then adds ; *Behold I give you power to tread upon serpents, and scorpions, and upon all the power of the enemy* ; the success was, that *They returned with joy, saying, Lord, even the Devils are subject unto us through thy name*. At his departure he promised and foretold thus : *These signs shall follow them that believe ; in my name they shall cast out Devils, they shall speak with new tongues, they shall * take up serpents ; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them ; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover* : All which things were abundantly fulfilled ; for a liberal communication of divine power was granted to them, enabling them to perform the greatest works ; so that (as S. Luke telleth us) *By the hands of the Apostles many wonders and signs were done among the people* ; the performance of which was so notorious, that upon knowledge, and in confidence thereof, *There came (saith the holy Historian) a multitude out of the cities round about unto Jerusalem, bringing sick folks, and them which were vexed with unclean spirits, and they were healed every one*. * The like power also was by the Apostles derived unto others, in such kind and measure, as the carrying on Jesus his great design (the propagation of God's truth, and the edification of his Church) did require ; by succession it was transmitted through several ages, and visibly continued so long, as such extraordinary means were useful or expedient for the conviction and conversion of the world : Most of the first Fathers of the Church do expressly testify concerning remainders thereof in their times : *It is not possible (saith S. Irenaeus for one instance, among others innumerable) to tell the number of the graces (or special gifts) which the Church through the whole world receiving from God doth in the name of Jesus Christ, crucified under Pontius Pilate, daily perform for the succour of the nations, &c.* And remarkable is the confidence of Tertullian, reporting the effects of this power in his time : he in his Apologetick speech for the Christians even dares to provoke the Ethnick Governors to trial, and to lay the issue concerning not only the truth of Christian doctrine, but the lives and safety of its professors thereon ; *Let, saith he, any person, manifestly possessed with the Devil, or one who is deemed to be rapt with a divine fury, be set before your tribunals ; that spirit, being commanded by a Christian to speak, shall as truly there confess himself to be a Devil, as elsewhere a God* — *If he do not so confess, not daring to lye, even there spill the blood of that procacious Christian : What (adds he) is more manifest, than that work ? what more faithful than that probation ? Stand not to these sayings, if your eyes and ears will suffer you*. The like assertions and challenges might be produced out of divers other Fathers.

Neither perhaps is the communication of this divine virtue so ceased now, that it would be wanting upon any needful occasion ; the frequent performance of such works among them in whom faith by abundance of other competent means may be produced and confirmed, unto whom also the first miracles are virtually present by the help of history and good reason, is indeed no-wise necessary, nor perhaps would be convenient ; but did the same pious zeal for God's honour, and the same charitable earnestness for mens good, excite any persons now to attempt the conversion of Infidels to the sincere Christian truth, I see no reason to doubt, but that such persons would be enabled to perform whatever miraculous works should conduce to that purpose ; for *the Lord's hand is not shortened, the grace of Christ is not straitned, the name of Jesus hath not lost its virtue*.

8. God did attest to our Lord by accomplishing his prediction and promise, in a plentiful * effusion of the divine spirit upon his Church and Disciples, for their perfect instruction and guidance, for their support and comfort, for enabling them

Omnis hac nominatio in illos dominatio & potestas de Christi nomine valet, &c. Tertull. Apol. 23. Acts 3. 16.

Matt. 10. 8.

Lu. 10. 9. 19.

Luke 10. 17.

Mark 16. 17.

* Apoc.

Acts 2. 4.

Acts 2. 43.

5. 12.

Acts 8. 17.

* Heb. 2. 4.

Rom. 15. 18.

Iren. 2. 48.

Tertull. Apol. 23.

Τὸς ἀνδράσις ὁ Χριστὸς ἐπέθηκε τὴν ἐξουσίαν

Chryl. de Sacerd. 4. in Joh. Or. 24. in Psal. 142.

Aug. de Bapt. 3. 16. Retract. 1. 13.

Ila. 59. 1.

50. 2.

The Spirit of God doth attest to him.

John 15. 26.

Acts 5. 32.

1 John 5. 7, 8.

1 Cor. 12.

** Acts 10. 45.*

John 15. 26. to convince and convert men to him ; *When* (said our Lord to them before his
 1 John 5. 7, 8. decease, concerning this attestation) *the comforter is come, whom I will send to you
 from my Father, even the spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall*

Luke 24. 49. *testify of me :* and, *Tarry ye* (said he again, after his resurrection) *in the city of
 Act. 1. 4. 2. 33. Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.*

Act. 4. 31. Accordingly soon after our Lord's ascension, as the Holy Spirit was conspicu-
 8. 17. 10. 44. ously dispensed, upon various occasions, in divers proportions, and in different
 11. 15. 13. 52. ways, according to the exigencies of things for the edification and enlargement
 19. 6. of the Church ; so especially at *Pentecost* it was in a most solemn manner, and
 1 Cor. 12. — abundant measure poured forth upon the whole Church, and each member of it ;
For then (saith S. Luke) *the disciples (to the number of one hundred and twenty per-*

Acts 1. 15. *sons) being gathered together — with one accord, in one place ; — suddenly there
 Acts 2. 1. — came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind* (which was a most proper
 emblem of the Holy Spirit's nature and powerful efficacy) *and it filled all the*

house where they were sitting (which then typified the Catholick Church, through
 which the Holy Spirit was to be diffused, to animate and actuate it) *And there ap-*

Μετ' ἑαυτοὺς
 δια τὸ πνεῦμα
 ἡμῶν δια-
 γογγυ. Naz.
 Orat. 44. *peared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, (denoting the various gifts and graces,
 imparted for expression of God's praise and propagation of his truth, which
 were to be enlivened by fervent charity, zeal and devotion) and it sate upon each*

of them ; implying that every faithful Christian constantly should partake of this
 heavenly benefit, according to his need : *And they were all filled with the Holy
 Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance :* that
 is, they were perfectly inspired, so that each was endowed with the gift of speak-
 ing a language before unknown to him ; which was a miracle very great, and
 most pertinent ; to learn a strange tongue-requiring much time and great pains ;
 the speaking such tongues being then very serviceable to the promulgation of the
 Gospel : All which event was very publick and notorious ; for that at that
 Festival-time *There were* (saith the Divine Historian) *dwelling at Jerusalem, Jews,
 devout men out of every nation under heaven : Now when this was noised about, the
 multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak
 in his own language, — the wonderful things of God.*

This was therefore a general attestation to our Lord, pregnant and clear as
 could be, both for conviction of unbelievers, and confirmation of the faithful ;
 the which effects it had, so that in virtue thereof, Saint Peter having explained the
 design of it, *Three thousand souls were added to the Church ;* and all did continue
 Acts 2. 41, 42. *stedfastly in the Apostles doctrine and fellowship.*

Besides also it was an illustrious pledge of that inestimable gift, to be perpetu-
 ally communicated to the Church for its edification ; and to each Christian for his
 direction and assistance in religious practice, according to the Evangelical cove-
 nant ; the which is a standing witness, attesting to our Lord, in the heart and
 Acts 5. 32. conscience of every good man, according to that of S. Peter ; *And we are his
 witnesses of these things ; and so is the Holy Ghost whom God hath given to them
 that obey him :* He indeed keeping his residence, and exerting his power in all

Eph. 1. 18. pious souls ; shining into their minds with *the true heavenly light* (that pure and
 2 Cor. 4. 6. *perfect wisdom, which is from above*) kindling charity, devotion, comfort and joy
 in their hearts ; supporting them in trials and temptations, raising their affections
 and desires above this present transitory world, disposing them to relish spiritual

things, and to entertain themselves with the hopes of future blessedness, doth

1 Cor. 12. 3. assure them, that *Jesus is the Lord,* doth seal to them the truth of his doctrine,
 Rom. 8. 16. Gal. 4. 6. the reality of his promises, the efficacy of his grace, the wonderful greatness of

2 Cor. 1. 22. his love and goodness toward them ; so that hence that is abundantly verified,
 4. 2. 5. 5. Eph. 1. 13. which S. John telleth us, *He that believeth on the Son of God, hath the witness in*

4. 30. 1 John 5. 10. *himself.*

There are divers other considerable attestations to our Lord, such as the divine
 sublimity of his doctrine, discovering it self to enlightned minds to shine from
 heaven ; the testimony of God's spirit to the hearts and consciences of good and
 faithful people, assuring them that *Jesus is the Lord,* and sealing to them the
 Rom. 8. 16. Gal. 4. 6. truth of his doctrine ; the operation of God's grace in production of moral ver-
 2 Cor. 1. 22. 5. 5. 4. 2. Eph. 1. 13. 4. 30. 1 Cor. 12. 3. 1 John 5. 10. tues, or the purgation of heart and amendment of life flowing from faith in him,
 the efficacy of prayers in his name offered to God ; all the joys, and comforts,
 and happy fruits springing from Christian devotion ; the good effects the Gospel
 hath

hath had in reformation of the world inducing many great benefits, and preventing mischiefs therein: But these, and the like being not so publick, so distinctly observable, so easily drawn into argument apt to convince the incredulous, I shall pass over; adding but one more of a more general and conspicuous nature.

Ὁ πᾶν
εἰς τὸ ὅτι τὸ
ὅτι ἔχει τὴν
μαρτυρίαν ἐν
ἐαυτῷ.

9. *Lastly*, God hath attested unto our Lord by the wonderful success which hath attended his Gospel in its conveyance and propagation: its, in so short a time, so generally prevailing in the hearts of men, triumphing over the mightiest oppositions, subduing the world to the faith and obedience of its self, accomplished by means to appearance so insufficient, and by ways so improbable, may seem to reason no less a miracle of providence against the course of humane affairs, than the rest performed by him, or for him, were miracles to sense, above the power of natural causes, both arguing the presence and assistance of omnipotency: the work was a *victory over the world*, and over hell, achieved by the *faith of Jesus*; and that a very strange one, whether we consider the combatants who fought for him, or the adversaries against whom, or the weapons by which, or the manner how they strove, or the very cause it self which they maintained for him.

They were *not many wise, not many mighty, not many noble, but a very few*, mean ^{2 Cor. i. 26} and poor, unlearned and simple men, whom no outward circumstances commended to humane regard, no worldly advantage furthered in pursuance of their design, who had nothing visible to rely on, to hearten, to support them in their endeavours: a few fishermen, publicans, tent-makers, and other persons of like

Ἀγγελοῖς,
καὶ ἰδιώταις.
Acts 4. 13.

quality, education, improvement and capacity, were the instruments of this great work; those brave souldiers of Christ, who boldly set themselves in array against all his adversaries; and what adversaries were they? who, but all the majesty and authority, all the force and violence, all the policy and craft, all the wit, learning, wisdom and eloquence, all the passion and rage of men, all the power, cunning and malice of the cursed spirits; in short, all the forces and endeavours of earth and hell combined against them. They were to check and controll the ambitions, interests, pleasures of mighty Emperours and Potentates; whose assumed Divine honours they decried as vain and wicked, whose commands they reprehended as unjust and impious, to whose power and pleasure they prescribed restraints, declaring them obliged to contain their practice within bounds of piety, equity and temperance: they were to suppress the credit, and the gain of all Priests, or Ministers of Religion in the world, whose doctrines they condemned as vain and silly, whose practices they reproved as vile and damnable: they were to confute all the subtilty of Philosophers, all the eloquence of Orators, all depths of learning, and improvements of reason or wit; impugning the opinions famous and current among men as false, or slighting them as frivolous: they were to overbear, and master the prejudices of all people, fortified by natural inclination and temper, by countenance of long tradition and custom; by education, by publick laws, and also mighty enforcements: they were to charge with reproach all ages past, and the Ancestors of all people in the world (those of one small people only in part excepted) of very gross ignorance and error, of sottish folly, of heinous wickedness and impiety: they were to sustain all the slanders, reproaches and persecutions which the resolute opposing so many interests, humours and opinions inevitably would produce: they were beside vigorously to assault Satan, and all his complices; to beat down his worship, and overturn his domination; to baffle all his craft and might, to stop his mouth, to bind his hands, to tread upon his neck.

Clem. Alex. well says, that no Philosophy would have endured such a test, or endured such a shock of persecution.

Καὶ τὴν μὲν φιλοσοφίαν τὴν ἑλληνικὴν ἔαν ὁ πᾶν ἄνθρωπος καλύσῃ. οἰκείται φθόγγημα, τὴν δὲ ἡμετέραν, &c. Strom. 6. (p. 502.)

Καὶ τοὶ γυνεῖων ὅσων καλυμμάτων γυνεῶν περὶ τὸ μὴ διασαλευθῆναι τὴν ἰνσὺ διδασκαλίαν τῇ οἰκονομίᾳ. Orig. cont. Celli. 7. (p. 349.)

All these great exploits they were to achieve in a most quiet and peaceable manner, in a way most plain and simple, without any terrour or tumult, any slight or artifice, any plausibility of language, or subtilty of reasoning; without applying either any rude violence, or fly allurement: they were indeed little more than barely to report a story, and to affirm it true of their own knowledge, adjoining in connexion with that story some plain honest rules of life here in this world, and denouncing some consequences on the belief of their story, and the practice of their rules in another world hereafter. These things it was their business to tell simply, and to averr confidently, charging men at their utmost peril

Cor. 4. 5.

2 Cor. 4. 7. to believe them; boldly condemning whatever thing, and what person soever
 12. 9. should oppose their report, or doctrine: they were not to assay the persuading
 this, or dissuading from the contrary by fine strains of speech, or with acute *en-*
 1 Cor. 2. 4. *thymems*; but to propose it without care or circumstance, in such a homely dress,
 and naked plainness of speech, that even children and idiots might easily compre-
 hend the main of their sense and drift: all the strength, the ornament, the charm
 of their discourse consisted in the clear sincerity shining through it; joined with
 a constant adherence to their doctrine, an earnest diligence in promoting it, an
 admirable patience in joyfully suffering all contumelies, and adversities incident
 to them for its sake; accompanied also with a blameless innocence and integrity
 of life, a sweet calmness of mind, and meekness of behaviour, together with a
 kind and charitable disposition toward all men: these were all the humane or na-
 2 Cor. 10. 4. tural *weapons of their warfare*; with which alone, God's help concurring, they
 did (to use S. Paul's words) *pull down strong holds, and cast down imaginations,*
and every high thing that exalteth it self against the knowledge of God; bringing into
captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ: in this strange manner did they
 maintain their cause.

A cause indeed, which of it self did not seem likely to prosper in the world,
 having in it self so little of plausibility, and affording to the embracers thereof
 Vid. Chryl. so very small encouragement: which enjoined to its followers the worship and
 Tom. 6. Orat. imitation of a person lying under extreme disadvantages in the eye of man; who
 61. p. 635. had lived in a very mean condition, and had suffered a most ignominious death;
 who therefore to be obliged to adore and obey could not but to the ordinary sense
 of men appear very offensive: which again recommended a doctrine little grate-
 ful, or rather very cross to the natural propensions, to the current principles, to
 the secular advantages of men; which indulged men in nothing that they were
 apt to like, but greatly curb'd and check'd them in the use of their liberties, gra-
 tification of their fancies, and enjoyment of their pleasures; which much dispa-
 raged all the pleasing goods, and all the flattering glories of the world; charging
 men never much to affect, or seek them, sometimes utterly to quit and renounce
 them; freely chusing in their stead to undertake a cross with all its pains and dis-
 graces, which propounded it as an essential ingredient of it self, or a condition
 necessary for all that should avow it, to *circumcise the heart, to mortify the deeds*
 Rom. 8. 13. *of the body, to crucify the flesh with its affections and lusts; to cut off right hands,*
 Gal. 5. 24. *and pull out right eyes; to part with all their fortunes, to hate their relations, to*
 sacrifice their lives, if they were thereto called, for its sake; which rendred men,
 as it were dead to all present fruitions, and unconcerned in all hopes here; enga-
 ging them entirely to place their contents and happiness in a reversion of things
 invisible and future: they, in fine, did hold forth a doctrine to the sense of flesh
 and blood full of most rigid laws, severe rules, harsh conditions, and *hard sayings,*
 apt to choak the faith of men, and to obstruct its entertainment with them.

Τὸ πρῶτον εὐαγγέλιον, τὸ οὐκ ἐκδομήσω μου
 τὴν ἐκκλησίαν, τὸ τοῦ πάντα εἰργάσατε,
 τοῖς τοῖς γὰρ οἱ τῶ θεοῦ λόγοι ἔργων διμυρ-
 ροῖ ἔργων θαυμασίων καὶ ᾠδῶν δόξων, &c.
 Chryl. Tom. 6. Orat. 61. p. 630. Πῶς
 ἐν τοσούτων περὶ ἡμᾶς τῶσδε καλῶ-
 μάτων καὶ πόνων ἔχον ἕτοιμα λαμβανόν, καὶ
 ἐκβαλὼν μαρτυροῦσαν τῇ ἀληθείᾳ, εἰ μὴ
 δεῖα πρὸς καὶ ἀμαχὸν δύναμις ἦν τῶ ταύ-
 τε εἰπόντι καὶ τελείοντι, &c. Ibid.
 p. 637.

Now that a handful of such persons, against such obsta-
 cles, in ways so preposterous, and different from the course
 of humane proceedings, were able to render so unlikely a
 cause so absolutely victorious; so that suddenly all the might,
 wit and eloquence of men did stoop unto it, and serve un-
 der it; that the Majesty of the greatest Princes gladly veiled
 thereto, that the prudence of Statesmen cordially did ap-
 prove it, that all the learning of the world yielded it self
 up captive and tributary thereto, that all superstition vanish-
 ed before it, and all the force of hell sunk under it; is it

not a huge argument, that God himself did in favour thereof interpose his omni-
 2 Chr. 14. 11. potent arm; that to the Lord of hosts (*Unto whom, as King Asa said, it is no-*
 1 Sam. 14. 6. *thing to help whether with many, or with them that have no power*; to whom it is
 Rom. 15. 8. *indifferent to save by many or by few*) this glorious victory is to be ascribed, who
 thereby pleased to accomplish his ancient promises, to maintain his holy truth, to
 further the salvation of his creatures, to promote his own glory, and especially
 to magnify the Name of his only beloved Son *Jesus*, our ever blessed Lord, to
whom for ever and ever be all praise. Amen.

Having thus largely endeavour'd to shew that *Jesus* our Lord is the *Messias*, and
 consequently supposing the truth of the Christian doctrine; let us now briefly re-
 capitulate

capitulate and explain in what manner, and in what respects the *New Testament* represents him as *Christ*; how according to that *Jesus* was signally chosen and consecrated by God, in a manner supereminent, to all the offices denoted by the title *Christ* (the office *Prophetical*, *Regal* and *Sacerdotal*) and how he effectually doth execute them.

Him (saith S. Peter in general) God anointed with the Holy Spirit and Power: Acts. 10. 38. God anointed him not with an external affusion of material oil (as neither were the *Patriarchs*, nor King *Cyrus*, who are yet called *the Christs of God*) that was only a ritual and symbolical business; but with a real infusion of divine grace and power, qualifying and enabling him perfectly to execute all those great and extraordinary functions. With this gladstome oil he was thoroughly anointed and replenish'd above measure; with this he was *sanctified from the womb*; when the *power of the highest* did overshadow him at his Conception; with this at his Baptism he was solemnly and visibly inaugurated; when *the heavens were opened* unto him, and *the spirit of God descended upon him as a Dove and came upon him*; with this in all the course of his life and ministry he was continually accompanied; the virtue of it being discovered and diffused in most sensible effects of wise and gracious discourse, holy and blameless conversation, wonderful and glorious performances, for the honour of God, and the benefit of mankind, to the delight and consolation of all well-disposed minds: God anointed *Jesus of Nazareth* (saith S. Peter Acts 10. 38) in the *Acts*) with the Holy Ghost; who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the Devil; for God was with him. He was by this Spiritual unction constituted in right, and in effect a *Prophet*, a *King*, a *Priest*.

I. *First, a Prophet*; For they were not mistaken, who, upon his raising the widows child, were amazed, and glorified God, saying, that a Great Prophet was raised up among them, and that God had visited his people. Nor they (in S. John's Gospel) who reflecting upon another great miracle (feeding multitudes with five loaves, and two little pickled fishes) brake into this confession; *This is in truth that prophet, who was to come into the world.* And the disciples well described him, who styled him, *A Prophet mighty in word and deed, before God and all the people.* He was so, as having an extraordinary commission from God, declared by vocal attestation of God himself from heaven, by express testimony of S. John the Baptist (the Person of most remarkable sanctity and greatest authority in his time) by the performance of innumerable and incomparable signs and works miraculous (arguments in the highest degree, and to the utmost possibility sufficient to assert and confirm it.) He was also in greatest perfection qualified for the exercise of that function, by inspiration complete and unlimited; by disposition of mind altogether pure and holy (expressed in a continual practice of life void of all sin and guile; by an insuperable courage and constancy, a transcendent wisdom and discretion, an incomparable meekness and patience, a most winning sweetness and goodness, a most powerful awfulness and majesty, shining in all his discourse and demeanour) Sutable also to the authority of his commission and the qualifications of his person were the weight, and the extent of the doctrine he in God's name revealed; It concerning no less than the salvation of mankind, and reconciliation of the world to God; the intire will of God, and whole duty of man: with all the laws and precepts, the covenants and conditions, the promises and threatnings relating to our future state. He did not (as other Prophets have done) prophecy about the constitution of one particular Law, Religion or Covenant; about the reproof or reformation of one state, the judgment or fate determined to one Nation, but his design reached to the instruction and conversion of all people, in all places, through all times, to the setting of a Law and Covenant absolutely universal and perpetual; Mysteries he brought forth never before revealed, and decrees never to be reversed; to the final doom of all the world did his prophetic denunciations extend. So is he a *Prophet*. Such he was in his temporal appearance, and administrations upon earth; and such he continues for ever in heaven; from thence upon all occasions by his Holy Spirit imparting to his faithful people all needful instruction in truth, direction in practice, admonition to duty, and comfort in trouble. He is also such by the ministry of his servants, whom he hath appointed, and whom he assists, to instruct and guide us.

2. He is also a *King*; by many unquestionable Titles; Of a great and extensive authority, exercising it to the best effects and purposes. He is a *King* by *nature* and *birth*: as *the only Son of God*, partaker of his eternal power and majesty; For therefore to him it was said; *Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; the scepter of thy Kingdom is a right scepter*; and as *the son of David*; For of him the Angel said— *The Lord God shall give unto him the throne of David his Father, and he shall reign over the house of David for ever; and of his Kingdom there shall be no end.*

He is also a *King* by *divine designation* and appointment. For, *Let all the house of Israel* (saith S. Peter) *know assuredly, that God hath made him Lord and Christ; and, The father hath given him authority to execute judgment, because he is the son of man* (or as such.) He is also *King* by *merit* and *purchase*; for, *He for the suffering of death was crowned with glory and honour; He was obedient to death, even the death of the cross; Therefore God super-exalted him, and bestowed on him a name above every name. To this end he both died and rose again, that he might Lord it over both the dead and living.* He is *King* also by *conquest*; having delivered us out of the power of darkness, and freed us from the vassalage of sin; *having spoiled principalities and powers, made a shew of them openly, and triumphed over them; having delivered us from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us; that we being delivered from our enemies, might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of our life.* He is also a *King* by our *election* and free choice, we having voluntarily put our selves under his protection, and submitted to his command, and taken upon our selves his yoke, and vowed everlasting fealty to him in our *Baptism*. Such a right he hath of Governing.

As for the *extent* of his *Kingdom*, it is in all respects boundless, both for place and time; 'tis universal and perpetual. He is the *Eternal King* of all the world: God hath *so exalted him and given him a name above all names, That to the name of Jesus every should bend, whether of things in heaven, or things upon earth, or things under the earth. To him that sitteth on the throne, and to the Lamb* by every creature in heaven, and in the earth, and under the earth are jointly to be ascribed the blessing, and the honour, and the glory and the power, for ever and for ever. He is constituted *above all rule, and authority, and domination, and every name that is named not only in this world, but in that which is to come*: 'tis his just title and proper badge, *The King of Kings, and Lord of Lords*; to whom all Nations are vassals, yea all creatures are subject and tributary. But he in especial manner is *King over his Church*; that *peculiar people*, whom he hath especially purchased to himself by his merits and blood: whom he hath subdued to his obedience by the sword of his Word, and by the prevailing virtue of his Spirit, that mystical *Sion*, in which 'tis said that *God will place his reign and residence for ever; that heavenly city*, whereof all the Saints are *fellow citizens*, and he the sovereign Head and Governour; *God hath* (saith S. Paul) *put all things under his feet, and hath given him head above all things to the Church.* In respect to which both the Evangelical dispensation here, and the future state of bliss hereafter are called the *Kingdom of heaven*. Over this he reigns, enjoying all Royal prerogatives, exercising all Royal administrations, and dispensing most Royal munificences. He hath in this 'his Kingdom established most righteous and wholesome laws; the which his subjects are by him obliged and enabled to obey. He constantly defendeth and protecteth his subjects from all invasions and assaults of their enemies (intestine enemies, their own lusts; external enemies, the Devil and the World.) He provides for all their needs and wants; he supports them in all their distresses and troubles. He exercises judgment over them; distributing fit rewards and punishments with exquisite justice and equity (most liberal rewards to the loyal and obedient; most severe punishments upon obstinate offenders and rebels.) He lastly restrains and suppresses, defeats and destroys all the adversaries to his royal dignity, and to the welfare of his good subjects, both visible and invisible, temporal and spiritual.

Out of his mouth (as it is in the *Apocalypse*) *there goeth a sharp sword that with it he should smite the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron. These mine enemies* (he shall one day say) *which would not that I should reign over them, bring them hither and slay them before me. He must reign* (saith S. Paul) *till he hath put all enemies under his feet.* Thus is he a *King* endued with sovereign right and power; crowned with glorious Majesty; enjoying all pre-eminences, and exercising all acts suitable to Regal dignity.

3. He is likewise a *Priest*, and that much above an ordinary one; *διαφορωτερος* ^{Heb. 8. 6.} *καθ' ἑσπεριαν*, ^{Ἀρχιερεὺς τῆς ἁγίας} *He hath obtained a more excellent function* (as the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews* speaketh) ^{ἑραπονομασμένος} *than ever any other Priest had.* *Every High Priest* (saith the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews*) ^{ἁγίων} *is appointed to offer gifts and sacrifices.* ^{Heb. 3. i} He did (as such) ^{8. 3.} once offer up an oblation, in worth and excellency far surpassing all the sacrifices and oblations that ever were made (all the fattest *Hecatombs* that were ever sacrificed, all the gold and precious stones that ever were dedicated, all the spices and perfumes that ever were kindled into incense, upon altar, were but vile and fordid, were ineffectual and unacceptable in comparison thereto) a willing oblation he made upon the *altar* of his *cross* of himself (his most innocent; most pure, most spotless and unblemished self) of his most glorious body (the Temple of the Divinity) of his most precious blood, of his dear life, *for the life, of the world*, and redemption of mankind; for the *propitiation of our sins, and the sins of the whole world*; an oblation which alone could appease God's wrath, and satisfy his justice, and merit his favour toward us. ^{i Pet. 1. 18.} ^{Heb. 9. 9.} ^{Heb. 7. 26, 27.} ^{10. 10. 5. 9. 12.} ^{Eph. 5. 2.} ^{John 10. 16.} ^{6. 51.} ^{i John 2. 2}

He doth also (which is another *sacerdotal* performance) *intercede for us* ; He in-^{1 John 2. 1.}
tercedes as an *Advocate* for the pardon of our sins (If *any man sin, we have an ad-*^{1 Tim. 2. 5.}
vocate with (or to) *the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.*) He intercedes for the^{John 14. 13.}
acceptance of our services. (whence we are enjoined to *do all things, to pray, to*^{15, 16, 16, 23,}
give thanks in his Name) for the *granting our requests* ; for *grace and assistance* ; for^{24.}
comfort and reward ; for all *spiritual blessings* and advantages to be conferred upon^{Eph. 5. 20.}
us ; he thus pursuing the work of salvation by his propitiatory sacrifices begun for^{Heb. 5. 7.}
us ; whence (as the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews* saith) *He is able to save to the uttermost,*^{Eph. 1. 3, 6;}
those that by him come to God, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for us.^{Heb. 7. 25.}

He doth also perform the *Priestly* function of *blessing*: Blessing the people in God's name, and blessing God in the peoples behalf; 'as did that illustrious Type of his *Melchisedec* (*Blessed*, said he, be *Abram* of the most High God, possessor of heaven and earth; and, *Blessed* be the most High God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand.) So hath *Jesus* effectually pronounced all joy and happiness to his faithful people; He pronounced blessedness to them in his *Sermons*; He blessed his disciples at his parting; *Lifting up his hands* he blessed them, saith S. *Luke*: *God in him* (saith S. *Paul*) *bath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places* (or in heavenly things) and, *God* (saith S. *Peter*) *having raised up his Son Jesus*, sent him to bless us in turning every one of us from his iniquity: and at the last day he will utter that comfortable benediction: *Come ye blessed of my father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.* So is *Jesus* a true and perfect *Priest*. And,

So finally in all respects is *Jesus God's anointed, and the Christ of God*: as the great *Prophet*, and *Doctor*; as the *Sovereign King* and *Prince*: as the *High Priest* and *Advocate* of his Church. And indeed, that he is so is the Fundamental Point of our Religion; which the Apostles did peculiarly testify, preach and persuade; the sincere belief of which doth constitute and denominate us *Christians*.

IV. The consideration whereof ought to beget in us a practice answerable to the relations between him and us, grounded thereupon.

If *Jesus* be such a *Prophet*, we must with careful attention, and a docile mind Heb. 2. 1, &c.
 hearken to his admonitions and instructions; we must yield a steady belief to Διὰ τοῦτο δεῖ
 all his doctrine, and we must adhere constantly thereto, and we must readily ἡμεῖς πεποι-
 obey and practice what he teaches. θῆναι τοῖς ἀν-
δέναι μὴ τοῖς

If he be a *King* we must maintain our due *allegiance* to him, pay him honour and reverence, submit to his laws and commandments, repose trust and confidence in him, fly to his protection and assistance in all our difficulties and needs.

If he be a *Priest*, we must with sincere faith and hope apply our selves unto him for, and rely upon his spiritual ministeries in our behalf ; sue for and expect propitiation of our sins by virtue of his Sacrifice ; the collation of all spiritual gifts from his intercession ; all comfort, joy and felicity in consequence of his effectual benediction. *Having* (so the *Apostle to the Hebrews* admonisheth us) *a* He. 10. 21, 22. *great Priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith.*

In short, if *Jesus* be *Christ*, let us be *Christians* ; Christians, not only in name, in outward profession, in speculation and opinion, but in very deed and reality, in our heart and affection, in all our conversation and practice. *Let every one* 1 Tim. 4:9
that

that nameth the name of Christ (that is, who confesseth Jesus to be Christ, and himself to be his follower) depart from iniquity.

Now the God of peace, that brought from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ, that great Shepherd of the sheep through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make us perfect in every good work to do his will, working in us that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

His Only Son.

S E R M O N XXI.

JOHN I. 14.

And we beheld his glory; the glory as of the only begotten of the father.

John 1. 18.
3. 16, 18.
John 4. 9.



THAT Jesus Christ our Lord is the *μονογενής*, the only Son of God, that is, the Son of God in a peculiar and high manner, otherwise far than any creature can be so termed, S. John doth here (and in several other places) suppose, or assert plainly; And it is a great point of the Christian doctrine, a special object of our faith. To shew the truth of which, to explain how it is to be understood, and to apply the consideration thereof to our practice, shall be the subject and scope of our present discourse.

1. That the *Messias*, designed by God to come into the world for the restoring and reconciling mankind unto God, was in an especial manner to be the Son of God, even the ancient Prophets did foretel and presignify: *Thou art my son, this day I have begotten thee*, saith God of him in the second Psalm. And of him, that which in the first less perfect sense was spoken to King Solomon (who as the son and heir of David, as the builder of God's house, as a Prince of peace, reigning in great glory, wealth and prosperity; as endued with incomparable wisdom, did most signally represent and prefigure him) was chiefly intended for him, and did more exactly agree to him: *He shall be my son, and I will be his father; and I will establish the throne of his kingdom over Israel for ever*: and again; *He shall cry unto me, thou art my father, my God, and the rock of my salvation*: Also I will make him my first-born, higher than the kings of the earth. And accordingly it was, even before our Saviour's appearance, a persuasion commonly passing among the Jews (both learned and unlearned) that the *Messias* should be the Son of God; as may be collected from several passages in the *New Testament*; in which being the Christ, and being the Son of God are conjoined as inseparable adjuncts, whereof one did imply the other, according to the sense then current, and previous to the embracing our Lord's doctrine. For Nathaniel we see was no sooner persuaded, that Jesus was the Christ, but he (according to his anticipation, common to the people) confesseth thus: *Rabbi, thou art the son of God; Rabbi, thou art the king of Israel*. Martha in like manner being moved to declare her faith concerning Jesus, expresseth it thus: *Yea Lord, I believe that thou art the Christ, the son of God, which should come into the world*: and likewise doth S. Peter, in the name of all his brethren, the Apostles: *We have believed, and have known, that thou art the Christ, the son of the living God*. S. John the Baptist also, doth thus express his belief and yield his testimony concerning Jesus: *And I said, and bare record, that this is the son of God*. Yea even the High-Priest himself implied the same, when examining our Lord he said: *Art thou the Christ, the son of the Blessed? I adjure thee by the living*

Psal. 2. 7.
Heb. 1. 5.
Acts 13. 33.

1 Chr. 22. 10.
28. 6.
2 Sam. 7. 13.
Psa. 89. 26, 27.
Heb. 1. 5.

John 1. 49.

John 11. 27.
6. 69.
Matt. 16. 16.

John 1. 34.

Matt. 14. 63.
Matt. 26. 63.

ing

ing God tell us, whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God : supposing that to be the Christ, and to be the son of God would concur in the same person. Yea the Devils themselves had learned this, who cried out, *What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou son of God?* Matt. 8. 29. Mark 1. 24. Luke 4. 41. 34.

Thus did the ancient Scriptures intimate, and thus were God's People generally persuaded about the *Messias* ; and that he is indeed the son of God, the Evangelical Scripture doth every where teach us, calling him not only at large the son of God, but more emphatically the ἀγαπῆτης (the darling son of God) the υἱὸς τῆ ἀγάπης, son of God's love, the υἱὸς ἀληθινός, God's true son (that is, such most properly, in a most excellent manner incomparably representing and resembling God) the ἰσθ υἱός (God's proper, or peculiar son) the πρωτότοκος, God's first-born ; God's υἱὸς μονογενὴς, his only begotten son : all which epithets import somewhat of peculiar eminence in the kind and ground of this his relation unto God. The relation itself in a large sense, and equivocally is attributed to several : Adam is called the son of God ; and the Angels are usually entituled such ; and Princes are styled the children of the most high ; and all men are said to be God's off-spring, and Good men are especially dignified with that appellation ; God's people as such (the Israelites of old, and Christians now) are the children of God ; Yea, God is the Father of all things, as the Maker and preserver of them : But all these, in comparison to Christ, are such in a manner very inferiour, and in a very improper sense ; for he is the Only son of God ; which denotes a relation in its kind singular, and incomparable ; from which all other things are excluded. Matt. 3. 17. 12. 18. 17. 5. Eph. 1. 6. Col. 1. 13. Rom. 8. 32. John 5. 18. 1 John 1. 20. Col. 1. 15. Heb. 1. 6. Luke 3. ult. Psal. 82. 6. Acts 17. 29. Matt. 5. 45. xxi πνα ἁγίου υἱοθετῶν. Naz. Oiat. 37.

Now that we may discern the difference let us consider the grounds and respects upon which this relation of our Saviour to God is built, or the reasons why he is called the son of God : There are several expressed or implied in Scripture.

1. Christ is called the son of God in regard to his temporal generation, as being in a manner extraordinary conceived in the Blessed Virgin by the Holy Ghost ; so the Angel expressly telleth us : *The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the highest shall overshadow thee, therefore also that holy thing, which shall be born of thee, shall be called the son of God* : So the Apostle also : *When the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son made of a woman* (or born of a woman, γυναικὸς ἐκ γυναικὸς ; γυναικόμενον in some Copies). A generation so peculiar and wonderful, without intervention of any father but God himself, is one ground of this relation and title ; he therein excelling the common sort of men. Luke 1. 35. τὸ γυναικόμενον ἀγίου. Gal. 4. 4. Luke 1. 32. He shall be great and shall be called the son of the highest, and God shall give him the throne of his father David.

2. Christ also may be termed the Son of God in regard to his resurrection by divine efficacy ; that being a kind of generation, or introduction into another state of life immortal. Others are upon this ground called the sons of God : * *They* (saith our Saviour) *who shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead — can die no more ; for they are equal to the Angels, and are the children of God* (υἱοὶ εἰσι τοῦ θεοῦ) *being sons of the resurrection*. How much more then may he be thence so named, who is the first fruits of them that sleep, and the first-born from the dead : especially since that of the Psalmist, *Thou art my son this day have I begotten thee*, was (according to S. Paul's exposition) verified in the raising him. In this respect Christ also did much excel all others, who upon the same ground are called the Sons of God. Dies iste quem tanquam extremum reformidas, aterni natalis est. Sen. Epist. 102. * Luk. 20. 35, 36. 1 Cor. 15. 20. 23. Col. 1. 18. Apoc. 1. 5. Acts 26. 23. 3. 15. 13. 32, 33. Psal. 82. 6. 29.

3. Christ is capable of this Title by reason of that high office, in which by God's especial designation he was enstated. If ordinary Princes and Judges (as being deputed by God to represent himself in the dispensation of justice ; or as resembling God in the exercise of their power and authority) have been called the children of the most High, in the language of Holy Scripture ; with how much greater truth and reason may he be called so, who was most signally consecrated and commissioned to the most eminent Function that ever was or could be ; who did whatever he did in God's name, who represented and resembled God so exactly ? It is his own argumentation and inference : *If he called them Gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the Scripture cannot be broken, say ye of him, whom the father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, thou blasphemest, because I said, I am the son of God ?* The extraordinary sanctification and mission did render him worthy and capable of that Appellation, far beyond all others, who have for the like reason obtained it. John 30. 36.

4. Whereas also it is said, that God did appoint, or constitute our Saviour heir of all things ; did give him Head above all things in the Church, and did put all things

^c things under his feet, did give him power over all flesh, did commit unto him all authority in heaven and earth; did exalt him to the highest place of dignity and authority next to himself; at the right hand of the Majesty in the highest; yea did place him upon his own throne and tribunal in his room, so that *The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son*; well may he in that respect be entitled the *Son of God*; as thereby holding the rank and privilege suitable to such a relation: He being the *Chief* of the Family, and next in order to the great *Pater-familias* of heaven and earth. Of him (saith S. Paul) *all the family in heaven and earth is named*; *Moses verily* (saith the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews*) *was faithful in all his house as a servant, but Christ as a Son over his own house*: and, *Being made so much better than the Angels* (saith the *Apostle*) *as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they* (they being only called *servants*, or *ministers*; he being entitled a *son* and *heir*.)

In these respects is our Saviour properly, or may be fitly denominated the *son of God* with some peculiaity and excellency beyond others: But his being with such emphasis called *God's only begotten son*, (denoting an exclusion of all others from this relation upon the same kind of ground) doth surely import a more excellent ground thereof, than any of these mentioned. For the *first Adam* did also immediately receive his being from the power and inspiration of God (God formed his body and breathed a soul into it) *Isaac*, *Samuel* and *John the Baptist* had also a generation extraordinary and miraculous, as being born of Parents mortified by age, and unapt for generation, by interposition of the divine power (so it is expressly said of *Sarah* *δύναμις ἐλάβεν εἰς κατὰβολὴν σπέρματος* she received power from God for conception of seed) which productions do not so greatly differ from the production of *Christ* as man.

<sup>Ἡ δὲ ἐνδεῖς καὶ
πύττα πνεύματος
καὶ οὐρανόθεν.</sup>

Heb. 11. 11, 12 And how can we conceive that the production of Angels should be so much inferiour to our Saviour's temporal generation, if there were no other but that?

And although our Saviour was the first and chief, yet was he not the only Son of the resurrection; *There were* (as the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews* saith) *many sons* of this kind *brought to glory*; and *Christ* was *first born among many brethren*; this is also a ground not proper or perspicuous enough for such a denomination; and indeed before it came to pass, he was called *God's son*; he was so when he lived, he was so when *God so loved the world, that he gave him for its salvation*.

Joh. 3. 16, 18. Neither doth the free collation of power and dignity how eminent soever well suffice to ground this singularity of relation; for we see others also in regard to their designation and deputation to offices of power and dignity, although indeed subordinate and inferiour to those he received, to be entitled the *sons of God*; and however this is rather the foundation of a metaphorical, than of a natural and proper *sonship*, which is too slender and insufficient for him; who in the most solemn and august strain is denominated such.

Likewise although our Saviour be the heir of all things, yet hath he co-heirs, whom *God hath* (as S. Paul speaketh) *together enlivened, and together raised, and together seated with him in thrones of glory and bliss*; beside that privileges of this kind are rather *consecutive* and *declarative* of this his Relation to God, than formally *constitutive* thereof: *If a son, then an heir*, saith S. Paul; inheritance follows *sonship*, and declares it, rather than properly makes it.

Moreover those prerogatives of singular affection, and favour appropriated to *Christ*, together with all those glorious preferments consequent on them, do also argue some higher ground of this relation; for how could it be, that merely upon account of that temporal generation (which did only make him a man, of like passions and infirmities to us, sin only excepted) or in respect to any thing consequent thereupon, God should affect him with so special a dearness, and advance him to dignities so superlative, *ὑπερπάντων πᾶσις ἀρχῆς, καὶ δυνάμεως, καὶ κυριατείας, καὶ παντοκράτου*, far above all *principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named*; *Angels, and authorities, and powers being* (as S. Peter says) *made subject unto him*? Such proceedings (that generation only, or any thing resulting from it, being supposed) do not seem consistent with that decent congruity and natural equity, which God is ever wont to observe in his regard to persons and in his ordering of things.

We must therefore search for a more excellent, and more proper ground of this magnificent relation, or peculiar *sonship*; and such an one we shall find clearly deducible from testimonies of holy Scripture, (and by several steps of discourse we shall deduce it.)

1. It is thence *first* evident; that our Saviour had in him somewhat more than humane, according to which he is said to have existed before his temporal generation here among men. Even as men after death are in regard to a superviving part of them, their immortal soul, said to be and live; for, even then, saith our Lord, *all men do live to God*. For, before his birth here, he is said to have been Luke 20. 38. in heaven, and to have descended thence: *No man, saith he, hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the son of man, which is in heaven*: Even when he visibly lived here, he was (as himself affirms) *secundum aliquid sui*, according to somewhat invisible in him, then actually in heaven; and according to that *somewhat* he was before in heaven; and by Union of that invisible being to humane visible nature, he is said to have descended from heaven. His ascension into heaven was but a translation of the humane nature thither, where according to a more excellent nature he did abide before the incarnation: for, *What* (saith he again) *if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up, where he was before?* John 6. 62. From hence he is declared worthy and capable of so transcendent preferments; for, *He that cometh from above, out of heaven, is above all things*; because, *The second man is the Lord from heaven*. He, as to his manifestation in the flesh, was John 3. 31. junior to S. John the Baptist, but in truth was of more ancient standing, and thence was to be prefer'd before him, as S. John himself perceived, and professed: *He that* (said S. John) *comes after me is preferred before me, because he was before me*. John 1. 15. He did subsist even before Abraham was born, whence without absurdity he could affirm, that He, and Abraham had interviews and intercourse together; so he discoursed with the Jews: *Thou art not* (said they) *yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?* John 8. 58. He replied; *Verily, Verily, I say unto you, before Abraham was, I am*: This saying did seem very absurd to them, and so offended them, that they took up stones to cast at him; not apprehending the mystery couched in his words; and that he had another nature, different from that which appeared to them; according to which that saying of his was verified. Yea farther, he had a subsistence and a glory before the world had a being; for thus he prays: *And now, father, glorify me, with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was*: *Glory* (that is a most honourable state of being, and excellent perfection) in 8. 27. 58. was not only destined to him, but he really had it, and enjoyed it with God, before the world was.

2. Necessary indeed it was, that he should exist before the world, for that, secondly, God by him made the world, and for that he made the world himself: Eph. 3. 9. God (saith Saint Paul) *created all things by Jesus Christ*; and, *By him* (saith the Heb. 1. 2. 11. 3 Apostle to the Hebrews) *God made the worlds* (or the Ages) *τὰ αἰῶνες*, that is, all things which ever at any time did subsist; those very ages, which the same Apostle saith *we believe to have been framed by the word of God*. By him (saith S. John in John 1. 3. the beginning of his Gospel) *were all things made, and without him was nothing made, that was made*; *δι' αὐτοῦ*, that is, *by him*, not *δι' αὐτόν*, for him only; to exclude that ungrammatical misinterpretation Saint Paul joineth both these notions together: *τὰ πάντα δι' αὐτοῦ, καὶ εἰς αὐτόν ἐγενήθησαν*, *All things* (saith he) *were made by him, and for him*; as also to prevent any restriction; or exception of matters created by him, he particularly reckoneth what things were made by him; *By him* (saith S. Paul) *were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth*; *whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers, all things were created by him, and for him*: He was not only (as some heterodox Interpreters would expound it) to create a new moral, and figurative world; he should not only restore and reform mankind, but he of old did truly and properly give being to all things; and among those things, he even created Angels, *all things in heaven*; beings unto which that metaphorical creation of men here doth not extend, or any-wise appertain: he therefore consequently, as S. Paul subjoins, *εἰς αὐτόν πάντα, doth exist before all things*; as the cause must necessarily in nature precede the effect.

3. He did indeed (to ascend yet higher, even to the top) exist from all eternity: for he is called absolutely *ἀρχή*, the beginning, which excludes all time previous to his existence; he is stiled *πρωτόγονος*, the first born of every creature, (or rather born before all the creation, as *πρωτός μὴ ὡς* signifies, *he was before me*, in S. John.) He is the Word, which was in the beginning, that is, before any time conceivable, and consequently from eternity. He is called the eternal life:

- John 1. 1. *The life* (saith S. John in the first Epistle; his life that is another name, frequently
 John 1. 4. attributed to Christ; especially by that Apostle; *the life*) was manifested, and we
 11. 25. 14. 6. did see it; and we bear witness, and shew that eternal life, which was with the Fa-
 1 John 1. 2. 5. ther (ὁ λόγος ὡς αὐτὸς καὶ θεὸς, the Word was with God; and, ὁ ὧν ὡς αὐτὸς καὶ πατήρ, the
 11. 5. 12. 5. 20. Life was with the Father, are, as I conceive, the same thing;) and more explicite-
 1 John 5. 20. ly in the same Epistle: We are (saith S. John) in him that is true, in his Son Jesus
 Christ; he is the true God, and the eternal life. Hence is he frequently in the Apo-
 Apoc. 1. 11, calypse stiled, the first and the last, the beginning and the end, Alpha and Omega;
 17. 2. 8. 21. 6. He that was, and is, and is to come; which phrases do commonly express the eter-
 22. 13. nity and immortality proper to God; as in that of Isay: Thus saith the Lord,
 Isa. 44. 6. the King of Israel; and his Redeemer, the Lord of Hosts; I am the first, and I am
 41. 4. 48. 12. the last, and beside me there is no God. The same is signified by that elogy of the
 Heb. 13. 8. Apostle to the Hebrews: Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to day, and for ever; (that
 is, who is eternally immutable) that Apostle also implies the same, when he saith,
 Heb. 7. 13. οὐκ ἔστιν αὐτῷ ἡμέραν καὶ τέλος, neither beginning of days, nor end of life; Melchisedek in a
 typical or mystical way, our Lord in a real and proper sense was such; beginning-
 less and endless in his existence. And the Prophet Micah seems to have taught
 Micah 5. 2. the same, saying of him (of him that should come out of Bethlehem, to be Ruler
 in Israel) that his goings forth have been from old, even from everlasting (or, from
 the days of eternity.) His eternity is however necessarily deducible from that,
 which is by S. John, S. Paul, and the Apostle to the Hebrews so plainly affirmed of
 him, that he made the Worlds, that he made the Ages, that he made all things;
 for if he made the World, he was before the foundations of the World, which
 phrase denotes eternity; if he made the Ages, he must be before all Ages; if all
 things were made by him, and nothing can make it self, then necessarily he was
 unmade; and being unmade, he necessarily must be eternal; for what at any time
 did not exist, can never without being made come to exist. His eternity also may
 1 Cor. 1. 24. be strongly inferred from his being called the Word, the Wisdom, and the Power
 In decret. of God; for if he were not eternal, ὡς ἀπὸ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ἦν ἡ ἀρχὴ τοῦ λόγου καὶ τοῦ θεοῦ, there was a
 Conc. Nic. time when God wanted these; when he was without mental speech, or understand-
 page 276. ing; when he was not wise, when he was not powerful; as S. Athanasius argues.
 It therefore doth with sufficient evidence appear from Scripture, that our Saviour
 had a being before his temporal birth, and that before all creatures, yea even from
 eternity. Furthermore,
 4. From what hath been said, it follows, that his being was absolutely Divine.
 If he was no creature, if author of all creatures, if eternally subsistent, then af-
 furedly he is God; that state, that action, that property are incommunicably pe-
 culiar unto God. Only God is ὁ αὐτὸς, being of himself originally, and independant-
 Heb. 3. 4. ly; only God is the Creator of all things (He that made all things is God, saith
 1 Tim. 6. 16. the Apostle to the Hebrews) Only God hath immortality (or eternity) saith S. Paul:
 Rom. 16. 26. No epithet or attribute is more proper to God, than that αἰώνιος θεός, God eternal.
 Hence is our Lord said by S. Paul before he did assume the form of a servant,
 Phil. 2. 6, 7. and became like unto men, to have subsisted in the form of God, not deeming it
 * Τὸ ἴσους τῷ θεῷ robbery * to be equal to God (or to have a subsistence in duration and perfection
 τῷ θεῷ equal to God) so that as he was after his incarnation truly man, partaker of hu-
 mane nature, affections and properties, so before it, he was truly God, partaking
 of the Divine essence and attributes. Thence is he often in the Scriptures abso-
 lutely and directly named God; God in the most proper, and most high sense:
 John 1. 1. In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God,
 saith S. John in the beginning of his Gospel (the place where he is most likely to
 speak with the least ambiguity, or darkness) the same word, which was in time
 made flesh, and dwelt among us, did before all time exist with God, and was God.
 1 Tim. 3. 16. God (saith S. Paul) was manifested in the flesh, justified in the spirit, seen of angels,
 preached among the Gentiles, believed upon in the world, assumed up into glory. Of
 which propositions, 'tis evident, that Christ is the subject, and by consequence
 Acts 20. 28. he is there named God. God is also by S. Paul said to have purchased the Church
 with his own blood; who did that, but he that also was man, even the man Christ
 Jesus? S. Thomas upon his conviction of our Saviour's resurrection did express
 John 20. 28. his faith upon him, by crying out, My Lord, and my God; which acknowledg-
 ment our Saviour accepted and approved as a proper testimony of that faith. (He
 permits

permits him to say it, or rather he accepts it, not hindring him, (saith S. Athanasius.) S. Paul calls the coming of our Lord at the resurrection, the appearance of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ. To the Son (as the Apostle to the Hebrews interpreteth it) it was said in the Psalm (Psalm 45. 7.) *Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; the sceptre of thy Kingdom is a right sceptre.* We are (saith S. John) *in the true one, in his son Jesus Christ, this he (ἐστίν) is the true God, and life eternal; no false, no metaphorical, no temporary God, but the very true God, the supreme eternal God. Out of whom (saith S. Paul, recounting the privileges of the Jewish nation) as concerning the flesh (or according to his humanity) Christ came who is over all, God blessed for ever; ὁ ἐπὶ πάντων θεός, the God over all; the sovereign God and Lord of all things; the most high; God blessed for ever; the ὁ ἀλόγητος, which is a characteristical title, or special attribute of God in the stile of the Scriptures, and according to the common use of the Jews.* Yea even of old, *Isaias foretold of the Child which should be born, of the Son which should be given to us, that his name should be called (that is according to the Hebrew manner of speaking, that he should really be; or however that he truly should be called) the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.*

In these places more clearly and immediately, in many other places obliquely, *Vid. 1 John 3.* and according to fair consequence; in many more probably, our Saviour is called God, God absolutely without any interpretative restriction or diminution. *Gal. 1. 1, 12, Jude 4.* And seeing the Holy Scripture is so careful of yielding occasion to conceive more Gods than one, seeing it is so strict in exacting the belief, worship and obedience of one only God, absolutely such; may we not well infer with S. Irenæus; *Now, (saith he, speaking indeed concerning the God of the Old Testament, whom the Gnosticks did not acknowledge to be the highest and best God, but in words, applicable to the God of the New Testament, whom we adore:) Now (saith he) neither the Lord, nor the Holy Ghost, nor the Apostles, would ever have called any one definitively, nor absolutely God, unless he were truly God: and, Never (saith he again) did the Prophets, or the Apostles, name any other God, or call Lord, beside the true and only God.*

That he is truly God, we might also from other appellations peculiar to God; from divinest attributes, and divinest operations ascribed to him; from the worship and honour we are allowed and enjoined to yield him, farther shew; but these things (in compliance with the time and your patience) I shall omit.

Other appellations also peculiar unto the supreme God are assigned to him, as that most appropriate and incommunicable name *Jehovah*: (of which in the Prophet *Isay* God himself says thus,) *I am the Lord, and there is none else:* and *Moses*; *Isa. 45, 6, 18.* *Jehovah our God is one Jehovah:* even this is attributed to him; for *This Deut. 6. 4.* (saith *Jeremy*) *is his name, whereby he shall be called, Jehovah our righteousness;* and *Jer. 23. 6.* of S. *John the Baptist* it was by *Malachy* foretold, that he should *prepare the way of* *Jehovah*. The name *Lord* (answering to *Jehovah*) is both absolutely, and with *Mal. 3. 1.* most excellent adjuncts commonly given him: *The second man*, saith S. *Paul*, *is the Lord from heaven;* *The Lord of all things* he is called by the same Apostle; and, *the one, or only Lord.* To us (saith he) *there is one Lord, by whom are all things.* And, *The Lord of glory, or most glorious Lord;* (If they had known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory;) And, *The Lord of Lords, and King of Kings,* he is called in S. *John's Revelation*, (They shall, saith he, war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them, for he is the Lord of Lords, and King of Kings;) *Apoc. 17. 14.* *Matt. 4. 10.* We are also by precept enjoined, and by exemplary practice authorized to render unto our Saviour that honour and worship, which are proper and due to the only supreme God; for, *Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve,* is the great law of true Religion:

* 'Tis only belonging to God (as S. Athanasius speaks) to be worshipped; a creature must not worship a creature, but a servant his Lord, and a creature its God. And, † They who call a creature Lord, and worship him as a creature, how (saith he) do

Συγχωρεῖ λέγειν, καὶ μᾶλλον προσκυνεῖν, μὴ καλῶν αὐτόν. Athan. Orat. 3. contra Ar. p. 394.

Tit. 2. 13. Heb. 2. 8.

1 John 5. 20.

Utrosque Dei appellatione significavit Spiritus & eum qui ungitur Filium, & eum qui ungit, id est Patrem, Iren. 3. 6. Rom. 9. 5.

Apoc. 5. 13. πᾶν κτίσμα (where by the way seeing all creatures worship him, he is excluded from being a Creature.)

Mat. 14. 61. Rom. 1. 25. 2 Cor. 11. 31.

Neque igitur Dominus, neque Spiritus Sanctus, neque Apostoli eum, qui non esset Deus, definitivè & absolute Deum nominassent, nisi esset verus Deus. Iren. 3. 6. Nunquam Prophetæ, neque Apostoli alium Deum nominaverunt, vel Dominum appellaverunt, præter verum, & solum Deum. Idem lib. 3. cap. 8.

* Οὐδὲν ἔστι μὲν τὸ προσκυνεῖν· κτίσμα· π κτίσμα ἢ προσκυνεῖ, ἀλλὰ δὲ αὐτὸ δισκύνει, καὶ κτίσμα θεοῦ. Athan. in Ar. Orat. 3. p. 394.

† Οὐτοὶ δὲ κτίσμα λέγοντες εἶναι τὸ κτίσμα, καὶ ὡς κτίσματι λατρεύοντες αὐτὸ, τὸ διαφέρειν ἀλλήλων. Ath. Or. in Ar. p. 296.

Heb. 1. 6. *they differ from the heathen ? But of him it is said, Let all the Angels of God worship him ; of him myriads of Angels say, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive the power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing : Yea all creatures in heaven and earth, and under the earth rebound the same acclamation, saying ; To him that sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb be the*
 Apoc. 5. 12. *blessing, and the honour, and the glory, and the worship, and the praise for ever. Un-*
 13. 4. 11. *to him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his blood — to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Hence the throne of God, the Father, and of*
 V. Apoc. 1. 5. *his Son are one and the same ; The throne of God, and of the Lamb, are in it, saith*
 Apoc. 22. 3. *S. John, speaking of the heavenly city ; For the Son (saith that great Father) reigning with the same royalty of his Fa-*
 τῷ τε γὰρ τὸ πατρὸς βασιλεῖον βασι- *ther, is seated upon the same throne with his Father. To in-*
 λεῖον ὁ υἱὸς ὅτι καὶ αὐτὸν θεῶν τὸ πα- *vocate the name of our Lord Jesus Christ is a practice cha-*
 τρι καθεύδουσιν. Athan. Orat. 2. in Ar. *acterizing and distinguishing Christians from Infidels ; as when S. Paul inscribes*
 1. Cor. 1. 2. *his Epistle to the Church of Corinth, Together with all that call upon the name of*
 Acts 9. 14. 21. *our Lord Jesus Christ in every place ; and when Saul is said to have authority from*
 Rom. 10. 12. *the chief Priests to bind all that called upon his name, so that we need not to alledge*
 13. 14. *the single example of S. Stephen invoking our Lord. Indeed himself informs us,*
 2 Tim. 2. 22. *that The Father had committed all judgment unto the Son, that all men should honour the*
 John 5. 23. 24. *Son even as they honour the Father. To wish and pray for grace and peace from our*
 2 John 3. *Lord Jesus Christ is the usual practice of the Apostles, and to dispense them is a pre-*
 Rom. 1. 7. *rogative of his common to him with God his Father. To have the same Holy Spirit*
 1 Cor. 13. *as the Father unmeasurably, and to send it from himself, with commissions and in-*
 2 Thes. 2. 16. *structions, and to communicate it freely, are especial characters of supreme Divini-*
 1 Thes. 3. 12. *ty, and much transcending any Creature ; as S. Athanasius observes ; With authority*
 Tit. 3. 6. *(said he) to give the spirit doth not sute a creature, or a thing made, but is an endow-*
 τὸ δὲ μυστὶς τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα, *ment of God. Whereas also we are often severely prohibited from relying or con-*
 καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα, *fiding upon any man, or any creature (as in that of the Prophet : Cursed be the*
 κτίσμα ὅτι, *man, that trusteth in man, and maketh his flesh his arm) we are yet allowed, yea*
 ἐν τῷ πνεύματι *we are obliged to repose our trust and confidence in Christ ; Yea trust in God*
 εἰς τὸν θεόν. *(saith he himself to his Disciples) trust also in me ; whence S. Paul calleth him*
 Ath. Orat. 3. *emphatically, our hope ; in his compellation to Timothy : Paul an Apostle of Jesus*
 in Ar. p. 38. *Christ, by the commandment of God our Saviour, and the Lord Jesus Christ, our hope ;*
 Jer. 17. 5. *which is the same title, that Jeremy attributes unto God ; O the hope of Israel, the*
 John 14. 1. *Saviour thereof, in time of trouble. Hence to him jointly with God the Father,*
 1 Tim. 1. 1. *and the divine Spirit that solemn benediction or prayer is directed ; The grace of*
 Col. 1. 27. *our Lord Jesus, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost be with*
 Jer. 14. 8. *you all ; as also a parity of highest adoration is then together with the same di-*
 2 Cor. 13. 13. *vine Persons yielded to him, when we are baptized in his name, and consecra-*
 ted to his service.

The divinest attributes of God are also in the most absolute manner, and per-
 John 3. 13. *fect degree assigned to him ; Eternity, as we discoursed before. Immensity of*
 presence and power, then implied, when speaking with the Jews he told them
 Matt. 18. 20. *that he was then in heaven ; and when he promises his Disciples, that he will be*
 Matt. 28. 20. *with them, whenever they meet in his name ; and also, that he will be with them to*
 Col. 2. 3. *the end of the world. Infinite wisdom and knowledge ; for in him are hidden all*
 John 16. 30. *the treasures of wisdom and knowledge ; and, Now are we sure (say the Disciples to him*
 21. 17. *in S. John) that thou knowest all things : and, Lord, (saith S. Peter) thou knowest*
 1 Cor. 1. 24. *all things, thou knowest that I love thee : and S. Paul calls him the wisdom of God,*
 and the power of God ; wherefore since God's wisdom is omniscient, and his power
 omnipotent, so consequently is he. In short, whatever attribute or perfection
 John 16. 15. *God hath, the same hath he : for, All things, saith he, that the father hath, are*
 mine, what creature without high presumption could say those words concerning
 John 16. 14. *the divine Spirit : He shall glorify me, for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it*
 unto you.

The divine attributes he expresseth by divine operations and works, which are
 ascribed to him. It is a most divine work to create, this we shewed before to have
 been performed by him : To sustain, and conserve things in being is another like
 work ; this he doth, *For he (saith the Apostle to the Hebrews) upholdeth all things*
 Heb. 1. 3. *by the word of his power ; and, By him, saith S. Paul, all things consist. To per-*
 Col. 1. 17. *form miracles, or do things surmounting the laws, and thwarting the course of*
 nature ;

nature ; such as by mere word and will rebuking winds and seas, curing diseases, ejecting Devils is the property of him, who (as the Psalmist says) *alone doeth great wonders*. Particularly to raise the dead, is a prerogative reserved by God in his own hand (for, *The Lord killeth, and the Lord maketh alive ; he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up*) This our Lord often did, at his pleasure : for, *As the father raiseth up the dead, and quickneth them ; even so the son quickneth whom he will ;* and of himself he saith in the *Apocalypse* : *I have the keys of hell and of death*. Especially to raise himself, which he assumeth to himself ; (*I, saith he, lay down my life, that I may take it up again ; I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again* : and, *Demolish this temple* (saith he again) *and in three days I will rear it* ; which it was impossible for him to do, and unintelligible how it should be done otherwise, than by the divinity resident in him. To be searching mens hearts and discerning their secret thoughts is a peculiar work of him ; that saith, *I the Lord try the heart, I search the reins* ; and of our Lord it is said, *He needed not, that any should witness about a man, for he knew what was in man* ; and by many experiments he declared this power. To foresee and foretell future contingencies to be peculiar to himself God signified when in the Prophet he thus challenged the objects of heathen worship : *Shew the things to come, that we may know ye are Gods* ; this our Lord did upon several occasions, particularly in the case of Judas his treason : *He knew* (saith S. John) *from the beginning, who they were, who did not believe, and who it was that should betray him*. This, I say, he did, not as the Prophets by particular arbitrary revelation, but immediately by his own Spirit ; whereby even the Prophets themselves were illustrated and inspired ; for it was (as S. Peter says) *The Spirit of Christ in them which testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glories that should follow*. To see and know God (who inhabits inaccessible light) is beyond a creatures capacity and state ; and yet belongs to him. None (saith he) *hath seen the father, save he which is of God ; he hath seen the father* : and, *None knoweth the father, but the son, and he to whomsoever the son will reveal him*. To remit sins absolutely he denied not to be the property of God, when his adversaries thus objected it : *Who can forgive sins, except God only* ? yet he assumed it to himself, and asserted it by a miracle. To save also God declared to be a peculiar work of his, when he said it, and reiterated it in *Esay*, and in *Hosea* ; *I am the Lord, and beside me there is no Saviour* ; which as yet, and which title are no less proper to our Lord. In fine, briefly, he claims to himself at once the performance of every divine work, when he saith, *Whatsoever the father doeth, that also doeth the son likewise*.

Now all this state and majesty, all these glorious titles, attributes and works, can we imagine that he whose name is *jealous* (as it is in *Exodus* 34. 14.) and who is *jealous of his name* (as it is in *Ezekiel* 39. 25.) who said it once and again in the Prophet *Esay*, that he will not give his glory to another ; can we conceive, I say, that he should communicate them, or should suffer them to be ascribed to any mere creature, how eminent soever in nature or worth, how dear soever upon any regard ? for indeed the highest creature producible must be infinitely distant from him, infinitely inferior to him, infinitely base and mean in comparison to him, as to any true perfection or dignity ; nor therefore can any creature be in nature capable of such names, such characters, such prerogatives ; nor can in any reason or justice accept or bear them. Our Saviour therefore, unto whom by divine allowance and injunction they are attributed, who willingly admits them, who clearly ascribes them to himself, is truly God.

5. Now the whole tenour of our Religion (according to dictates of Scripture most frequent and obvious) asserting the Unity of God ; our Saviour therefore, being God, must of necessity partake the same individual essence with God his Father ; and it must be certainly true, which he affirmeth concerning himself : *I and the father are one* (*ἐν ἑαυτῷ*, are the same thing, or one in nature ; not *ἐκ ἑαυτῷ*, the same in person, or manner of subsistence) and what he again saith ; *He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father* ; and, *I am in the Father, and the Father in me* ; by the divine essence common to both.

Yet hath he not this essence from himself, but by communication ; for, *As the Father hath life in himself, so he hath given the son to have life in himself*. And *He that is* or hath his essence from God, is the periphrasis he gives of himself. He is not first in order, as an original, but is the Image of the invisible God.

God (an image indeed most adequate and perfectly like, as having the very same nature and essence. He is ἀπαύλασμα ἡ δόξης (the effulgency of his Father's glory) and χαρακτήρ ἡ ὑποστάσις, the character, or exact impression of his substance. He is the internal word, or mind of God, which resembles him, and yet is not different from him: He is the life, the wisdom, the power of God, which terms denote the most intrinsic and perfect unity. So the Apostles by the most apposite comparisons that nature affords, strive to adumbrate the ineffable manner of that eternal communication of the divine nature from God the Father to our Saviour; the which is that generation, whereupon the relation, about which we speak, is founded; or, because of which, our Lord is most truly and properly called *The only begotten Son of God*. For, if to produce a like in any kind or degree, be to generate; then to give a being without any dissimilitude or disparity is the most proper generation: our Saviour therefore hence truly is the Son of God the Father. And that he is so only, that no other beside him hath been ever thus begotten, is evident; for that as no reason of ours could have informed us, that our Saviour himself was thus begotten, so no revelation hath shewed us that any other hath been; and we therefore cannot without extreme temerity suppose it. We are sufficiently instructed that all other divine productions together with the relations grounded on them are different from this; by creation things receive a Being from God infinitely distant from, infinitely unequal and unlike to the divine essence; and that *filiation*, or sonship which doth stand upon adoption and grace is wholly in kind different from this. And the communication of the divine essence jointly from the Father and Son to the Holy Spirit, doth in manner (although the manner thereof be wholly incomprehensible to us) so differ from this, that in the Holy Scripture (the only guide of our conception, and of our speech in matters of this nature far surpassing our reason) is never called generation; and therefore we must not presume to think, or call it so.

But let so much suffice for explication of the Point; a Point represented in Scripture so considerable, that the belief thereof (if it have that sincerity, and that strength, as to dispose our hearts to a due love and reverence of the Son of God, attended with, or attested to by a faithful obedience to his laws) doth raise us also to the privilege of becoming the Sons of God, and doth mystically unite us to him, and elevateth us above the world; so doth S. John teach us: *To as many (saith he) as received him* (received him as the Son of God, or believed him to be so) *to them gave he the power (or the privilege) to become the sons of God.* And, *Who-soever (saith he) shall confess, that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God.* And, *Who (saith he again) is he that overcometh the World, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?* of so great importance is the Point. Of which I shall only now farther briefly propose some practical applications.

I. We may hence learn whence the performances and the sufferings of Christ become of so high worth, and so great efficacy. *Wonder not (saith S. Cyril the Catechist) if the whole World was redeemed; for it was not a bare man, but the only Son of God that died for it.* It is not so strange, that God's only Son his mediation, should be so acceptable and so effectual with God; that the blood of God's dearest Son should be so precious in God's sight, that the intercession of one so near him should be so prevalent with him. What could God refuse to the Son of his love earnestly soliciting and suing in our behalf? What debts might not so rich a price discharge? What anger could not so noble a sacrifice appease? What justice could not so full a dispensation satisfy? *We were not (S. Peter telleth us) redeemed with corruptible things, with silver or gold (no; whole Indies of such stuff would not have been sufficient to ransom one soul) but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish, and without spot.* It was not (as the Apostle to the Hebrews remarketh) by the blood of goats and heifers, that our sins were expiated (no; whole hecatombs would have nothing availed to that purpose) but by the blood of Christ who by the eternal spirit offered up himself spotless unto God, (who as the eternal Son of God did offer himself a sacrifice not to be blamed or refused) *It is (as S. John saith) the blood of Christ, the Son of God, which purgeth us from all sin.* And well indeed might a Person so infinitely noble, worthy and excellent be a sufficient ransom for whole worlds of miserable offenders, and captives. Well might his voluntary undergoing such inconveniences and infirmities of life, his suffering so disgraceful and painful a death countervail the deserv-

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Ὁ ὅς ἡμεῖς
συμμετέχουσιν
τοῦ Χριστοῦ χάριτι,
τῷ δι' αὐτοῦ,
πρὸς τὸν ἡ
ἰσοδυναμία ἀνα-
βαίνουσιν δόξ-
αν. Cyril. Al.

John 1. 12.
1 John 4. 15.

1 John 5. 5.
Μὴ θαυμά-
ζης ὅτι κόσμος
ὅλος ἐλυτρώ-
θη ἡ ἡμεῖς
ἀνθρώπων
ψυχὰς ἀλλ' οὐ
ὅτι δὲ μόνον
ἡμεῖς ὁ Χριστὸς
ἀποθνήσκων,
&c Cyril.
Catech. 13.

1 Peter 1. 18.
19.
Plalm 49. 7.

Heb. 9. 12,
13. 14. 10.
4. 8, 10.

1 John 1. 7.

ed punishment of all mankind; well might his so humble, so free, so perfect submission to God's will infinitely please God, and render him propitious to us. Well might (as S. Athanasius speaks) *the very appearing of such a Saviour in the flesh* ^{ἡ ἐνσαρκος} *be a general ransom of sin, and become salvation to every creature;* ^{παροσία τοῦ σωτῆρος} *the which S. Paul thus expresth: God sending his own son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh;* ^{καὶ κτισσῶς} *for if our displeasing, injuring and dishonouring him, who is so great and so good, doth aggravate our offence;* ^{πέποιθς, σωτη- ελα γέγοναν.} *the equal excellency and dignity of the Person, submitting in our behalf to the performance of all due obedience, and all proper satisfaction may proportionably advance the reparation offered, and compensate the wrong done to God.* ^{Athan. ad. Adelp. Rom. 8. 3.} Well therefore may we believe, and say with comfort, after the *Apostle*; *Τίς ἐγγυλάσει κατὰ τοῦ ἐκλεκτοῦ;* ^{Rom. 8. 33.} *Who shall criminate against the elect of God? it is God, that justifieth* (it is the Son of God, it is God himself, who satisfies divine justice for us) *who is there that condemns? it is Christ that died.*

2. We may hence be informed, what reverence and adoration is due from us to our Saviour, and why we *must honour the Son, even as we honour the Father*, ^{John 5. 23.} why even all the *Angels must worship him*; ^{Heb. 1. 6.} why *every thing in heaven, and earth, and beneath the earth must bend the knee* (that is, must yield veneration and observance) ^{Phil. 2. 9.} to him; why by all creatures whatever the same preeminence is to be ascribed, and the same adoration paid jointly and equally to *God the Father Almighty, who sits upon the throne, and to the Lamb his blessed Son, who standeth at his right hand.* Such divine glory and worship we are obliged to yield him because he is the Son of God, one in essence, and therefore equal in Majesty, with his Father: were it not so, it would be injury to God, and sacrilege to do it; God would not *impart his glory*, we should not attribute it unto another. So this consideration grounds our duty, and justifies our practice of worshipping our Lord; it also encourages us to perform it with faith and hope; for thence we may be assured, that he being the Son of God omniscient doth hear and mind us; being the Son of God omnipotent, he can thoroughly help and save us; being also as such absolutely and immensely good, he will be always disposed to afford what is good and convenient for us in our need.

3. We hence may perceive the infinite goodness of God toward us, and our ^{Tit. 3. 4.} correspondent obligation to love and thankfulness toward him. *In this* (saith S. ^{Eph. 2. 4.} *John*) *was manifested the love of God towards us, because God sent his only begotten Son into the World, that we might live through him:* ^{John 4. 9.} *In this* (adds he) *is love* (love ^{10.} indeed, love admirable, and inconceivable) *not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his only begotten son to be a propitiation for our sins.* Can there be imagined any equal, any like expression of kindness, of mercy, of condescension, as for a Prince, himself glorious and happy, most freely to deliver up, out from his own bosom, his own only most dearly beloved Son, to the suffering most base contumelies, and most grievous pains for the welfare of his enemies of rebels and traitors to him? Even such hath been God's goodness to us: The Son of God, the heir of eternal Majesty, was by his Father sent down from heaven (from the bosom of his glory and bliss) to put on the form of a servant, to endure the inconveniences of this mortal state, to undergo the greatest indignities and sorrows, that we, *who were alienated, and enemies in our mind by wicked works*, ^{Col. 1. 21.} *might be reconciled to God;* might be freed from wrath and misery; might be capable of everlasting life and salvation: ^{John 4. 9.} *substantive to such unexpressible goodness* ought our gratitude to be toward God: what affectionate sense in our hearts, what thankful acknowledgments with our mouths, what dutiful observance in all our actions doth so wonderful an instance of mercy and goodness deserve and require from us.

4. This consideration may fitly serve to beget in us hope and confidence in God upon any occasions, of need or distress, to support and comfort us in all our afflictions: for, *He that so loved us, that he gave his only begotten son for our salvation and happiness;* ^{John 3. 16.} how can we ever suspect him as unwilling to bestow on us whatever else shall to his wisdom appear needful or convenient for us? He that out of pure charity and pity toward us did part with a jewel so inestimable, how can any thing seem much for him to give us: it is the consolatory discourse of S. Paul: *He* (saith the *Apostle*) *that did not spare his own son, but delivered him up for us* ^{Rom. 8. 32.} *all; how shall he not with him freely give us all things?* all things that we truly need,

- need, all things that we can reasonably desire, all things which are good and fit for us.

5. S. John applieth this consideration to the begetting charity in us toward our brethren. *Beloved* (saith he) *if God so loved us* (as to send his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live by him) *we ought also to love one another*. If God so lovingly gave up his only Son for our sakes; what in grateful regard to him (in observant imitation of him) what expressions, I say, of charity and good will ought we to yield toward our brethren? what endeavours, what goods, what life of ours should seem too dear unto us for to expend or impart for their good? shall we be unwilling to take any pains, or suffer any loss for them, for whom (together with our selves) the Son of God hath undergone so much trouble, so much disgrace, so much hardship? shall we, I say, be uncharitable when the Son of God hath laid upon us such an obligation, hath set before us such an example?

6. This consideration also may inform us, and should mind us concerning the dignity of our nature and of our condition; and consequently how in respect to them we should behave our selves. If God did so much consider and value man, as for his benefit to debase his only Son; if the Son of God himself hath deigned to assume our nature, and to advance it into a conjunction with the divine nature, then is man surely no inconsiderable or contemptible thing; then should we despise no man, whom God hath so regarded and so honoured; then ought we not to neglect or slight our selves: if we were worthy of God's so great care, we ought not to seem unworthy of our own. We ought to value our selves, not so indeed as to be proud of so undeserved honour, but so as to be sensible thereof, and to sute our demeanour thereto. Reflecting upon these things should make us to disdain to do any thing unworthy that high regard of God, and that honourable alliance unto him. It should breed in us noble thoughts, worthy desires, and all excellent dispositions of soul conformable to such relations; it should engage us unto a constant practice, befitting them, whom God hath so dignified, whom the Son of God hath vouchsafed to make his brethren: by affecting any thing mean or sordid, by doing any thing base or wicked, we greatly undervalue our selves, we must disparage that glorious Family; into which by the Son of God his incarnation we are inserted. *Ταῦτα ἐν ᾧ καὶ τοῦ ἀξίου καὶ φιλοσοφίου ἐνδεξόμεθα, καὶ μὴ ἐν ἡμεῖς καὶ οὐδὲν κοινὸν τῷ γένει* Let us therefore (saith S. Chrys.) shew a Philosophy worthy of this honour; having nothing common with this earth. (in Joh. 1. Hom. 18.)

Heb. 2. 11.

Acts 3. 26.
Rom. 6. 22.

Heb. 6. 6.
10. 28.

Heb. 10. 28.

7. This consideration doth much aggravate all impiety and sin. Wilful sin upon this account appeareth not only disobedience to our Creator and natural Lord, but enormous offence against the infinite bounty, and mercy, and condescension of our Saviour; a most heinous abusing the Son of God, who came down into this homely and humble state on purpose to bless us in turning every one of us from our iniquities; to free us from the grievous dominion, and from the woful effects of sin; we thereby frustrate the most gracious intentions of God, and defeat the most admirable project that could be for our benefit and salvation: We thereby trample upon the Son of God, recrucify him, and put him to open shame: so the Apostle to the Hebrews telleth us, implying the heinous guilt, and sad consequence of doing so: *He* (saith the Apostle) *that despised Moses his law died without mercy; Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing?*

Luke 20. 13.

8. Lastly, This consideration may serve to beget in us a high esteem of the dispensation Evangelical, and hearty submission thereto. Almighty God (as is signified in the Parable) after several provisions for the good of mankind, and several messages from heaven to the world here, did at last send his Son, with this expectation: *Surely they will reverence my Son*: And surely much reason he had to expect the greatest reverence to be yielded to his Person; the readiest credence, and obedience to his word. For if any declaration of God concerning his will, or our duty, however proceeding from him (either by dictate of natural reason, or by the instruction of Prophets, or by the ministry of Angels) ought to be entertained with great respect and observance; much more should the overtures of greatest mercy and favour exhibited by his own Son (on purpose sent unto us to discover them) be embraced with highest regard, and humblest reverence, and most hearty compliance. 'Tis the Apostle to the Hebrews his discourse, and inference:

renerce :

rence : *Therefore* (saith he, therefore, because God hath in these last times spoken Heb. i. 2. unto us by his Son) we ought *πλεονεξέω* to give more (abundant, or more) 2. i. 3. earnest heed to the things which we have heard ; for (subjoins he) *How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation ; which at first began to be spoken by (our) Lord ; and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him.* *Ταῦτ' ἐν διανοῇς σπέρουτε, καὶ ἀναλογιζόμενοι καθαρίσωμεν ἡμῶν τὸ βίον, καὶ λαμπρὸν ποιήσωμεν.* *Continually therefore revolving and recounting these things, let us cleanse our life, and make it bright :* So we conclude with good S. Chrysostome.

Almighty God, who hast given us thy only begotten Son to take our nature upon him ; grant that we being regenerate, and made thy children by adoption and grace, Vid. Chryl. Tom. 6. pag. 623, &c. may daily be renewed by thy Holy Spirit, through the same our Lord Jesus Christ, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the same spirit, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

Our Lord.

S E R M O N XXII.

E P H. IV. 5.

One Lord.



AS the name of God (truly common to all three Persons of the Blessed Trinity) is (not in way of exclusion, but) according to a mytterious peculiarity (*κατ' οἰκονομίαν*, in way of dispensation accommodated to our instruction, as the Greek Fathers express it) attributed to God the Father, who is the fountain of the Deity, and first in order among the divine Persons ; so likewise is the Name Lord, truly common to the other persons, peculiarly (though also not exclusively) ascribed and appropriated unto God the Son ; who therefore in the stile of the *New Testament*, which more fully have revealed him, is called sometimes absolutely Lord, sometimes the Lord Jesus, sometimes our Lord ; to acknowledge and call him so being the especial duty, and the distinctive mark or character of a Christian : for, to us, as there is one God and Father of all, and one Holy Spirit, so there is (as S. Paul here in my Text doth say) *One Lord*. And otherwhere : *There be* (saith he, there be according to popular estimation, and worldly use) *Gods many, and Lords many, but to us there is one God the Father, and one Lord Jesus Christ.* Hence to call upon the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, (that is, by confession and practice to acknowledge him our Lord) gives a periphrasis, or description of a Christian (*To the Church of God that is in Corinth, sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be Saints, together with all that call upon the name of the Lord Jesus Christ in every place ;* that is, together with all Christians every where, so doth S. Paul inscribe his first Epistle to the Corinthians) whence, *No man* (saith he in the same Epistle) *can call Jesus Lord, but by the Holy Ghost ;* that is, no man can heartily embrace Christianity without the gracious assistance of God's Holy Spirit. The reason of which Appellation, being so peculiarly attributed unto Christ, may be, for that beside the natural right unto dominion over us, necessarily appertaining to him as our God, who hath made us, and doth preserve us, there are divers other respects and grounds supervenient, and accruing to him from what he hath undertaken, performed and undergone for us, in spontaneous obedience to the will of God his Father, upon which also

Luke 2. 11.
"Ὁς ἐστὶν Χεὶρ
σὸς, Κύριος."

1 Cor. 8. 6.

1 Cor. 1. 2.
Acts 9. 14.

1 Cor. 12. 3.

the Title of *Lord* is due unto him : the which to declare first, then to apply them unto our practice shall be the subject and scope of our present discourse.

In whatsoever notion we take the word *Lord* ; either as a *Prince* over Subjects, or as a *Master* over Servants, or as an *Owner* of goods, or as a *Preceptor*, and President over Disciples, or as a *Leader* and Captain to followers ; or as a person singularly eminent above inferiours ; he is according to all such notions truly *Our Lord*.

According to whatever capacity we distinctly or abstractively consider him, either as the *Son of God*, or as the *Son of Man* ; or as *θεοῦ υἱὸς*, (jointly *God and Man*, united in one Person) as *Jesus* our Saviour, as *the Christ of God*, he is *our Lord*.

If we examine all imaginable foundations of just dominion, eminence in nature the power, the collation of being, or preservation thereof ; donation, conquest, purchase, merit, voluntary compact, upon all these he hath a right of *Lordship* over us duly grounded.

I. He is, I say, first *our Lord* according to every notion, and acception of the word *Lord*.

He is our *Prince* and Governour, we are his subjects and vassals : for, to him it was said, *Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever ; the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre*. Of him it was prophesied ; that *the government should be upon his shoulder*, and that *of the increase of his government and peace there should be no end* : *He is the King of Israel*, or of the Church, who, as the Angel told the Blessed Virgin, *shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever and ever*. *God hath given him head over all things to the Church*. So is he a Prince most absolute, endued with sovereign right and power, crowned with glorious Majesty, enjoying all pre-eminences, and exercising all acts suitable to Regal dignity, in respect to all things, and particularly in regard to us.

He also is our *Master*, and we are his Servants ; the Church is a house and family, whereof he is the *οικοδομητής*, or Householder ; *If* (saith he) *they have called the Master of the house Beelzebub, how much more those of his household* (*τῶν οἰκιστῶν αὐτοῦ*, *famulos ejus*, his domesticks, or menial servants). *All the family in heaven and earth are named of him* (saith S. Paul) that is, the whole Church (both triumphant above in heaven, and militant here on earth) is his family, or called the family of him, as of its Lord. *Christ* (saith the Apostle to the Hebrews) *is as a Son over his house, whose house are we*. *He that is called free, is a servant of Christ* : and, *We serve the Lord Christ* ; and, *We have a Master in heaven*, saith S. Paul : *Blessed* (saith our Lord himself) *is that servant, whom his Lord coming shall find so doing* ; that is, whom *Christ, our Lord*, coming to judgment shall find discharging his duty faithfully. He indeed as a good Master governeth, ordereth and maintaineth his Family well ; furnisheth and feedeth it, with all necessary provisions ; protecteth it from all want, and all mischief ; appointeth to every one therein his due work and service, and payeth to each his due wages and recompence.

He is also our *Owner* ; or the Possessor and Proprietary of us ; *The Lord that bought us*, as S. Peter calls him ; and consequently, who possesseth and enjoyeth us. *We are not our own* (saith S. Paul) *for we were bought with a price* : whence we are become entirely subject to his disposal.

He likewise is our *Preceptor*, or *Teacher* ; or that is, the Lord of our Understanding, which is subject to the belief of his dictates ; and the Lord of our Practice, which is to be directed by his precepts. *Ye* (saith he) *call me Master, and Lord*, (*διδάσκαλον, καὶ κύριον*, *Doctor and Lord*) *and ye say well, for so I am* : And, *Be ye not called Masters* (*καθηγηταί*, guides in doctrine) *for one is your Master, even Christ*. And, *Every thought of ours* (saith S. Paul) *is to be captivated to the obedience of Christ* : Such, as infallibly wise, and perfectly veracious, he necessarily is unto us ; such he is, as sent on purpose by God to enlighten our minds with the knowledge of heavenly truth ; and to *guide our feet into the ways of peace* ; whence we cannot but be obliged to embrace his doctrine, and to observe the rules which he prescribeth us.

He is therefore also our *Captain* and *Leader* ; whose orders we must observe, whose conduct we should follow, whose pattern we are to regard and imitate in all things : He is stiled *ἀρχηγὸς πίστεως*, the *Captain of our faith*, *ἀρχηγὸς ζωῆς*, the *Captain of our life*, *ἀρχηγὸς σωτηρίας*, the *Captain of our salvation*, *ἀρχιποίμην*, our *chief Shepherd*, the

the *Apostle*, and high Priest of our profession ; the *Bishop of our Souls*. In fine, he ^{Acts 3. 15.} ^{5. 31.} (according to what S. Paul says) *is in all things, the primacy,* ^{1 Pet. 2. 25.} and *preeminence* ; so that according to all notions and senses of *Lordship* he is our ^{5. 4.} Lord ; but chiefly he is meant such in the principal sense, as having an absolute ^{Heb. 3. 1.} right and power to command and govern us. ^{Col. 1. 18.}

II. *Christ* is also our *Lord* according to every capacity or respect of *nature* or *office*, that we can consider appertaining to him.

1. He is our *Lord* as by *nature* the *Son of God*, partaking of the divine essence and perfections : he as such being endued with eminence superlative, and with power irresistible ; as such having created all things, and upholding all things ; whence all things necessarily and justly are subject to his order and disposal ; all things according to all right and reason are to be governed, possessed and used according to his pleasure. Hence is that most august, and most peculiar name, *JEHOVAH* (denoting either independency, and indefectibility of subsistence, or uncontrollable and infallible efficacy in operation, or both of them together ; which therefore is by the Greek Interpreters fitly rendred *ως*, and after them *Lord* by our Translators ; for the word *ως* doth signifie to subsist, and *ως* is used to denote efficacy, ratification, stedfast power or authority) is assigned to him ; *This is his name whereby he shall be called, JEHOVAH OUR RIGH-* ^{Jer. 23. 16.} *TEOUSNESS*, saith *Jeremy* of him : and, *I will have mercy upon the house* ^{Hos. 1. 7.} *of Judah, and will save them by Jehovah their God* (saith *God* in *Hosea* concerning the salvation accomplished by him) and in the Prophet *Zechary*, he thus speaks of himself : *Sing, and rejoyce, O daughter of Sion, for lo I come, and I will dwell* ^{Zech. 10. 12.} *in the midst of thee, and thou shalt know, that the Lord of hosts hath sent me unto thee* : where it is said, that *Jehovah*, being sent by *Jehovah*, should come and ^{Jehovah à} dwell in the Church, enlarged by accession of the *Gentiles* ; who can that be, but ^{Jehova.} our *Lord Christ*, who dwelt among us, and was by *God* his Father sent unto us ? ^{Gen. 19. 24.} And what in the *Old Testament* is spoken of *Jehovah* is by infallible *Expositors* in ^{apud Iren.} the *New* attributed to our *Lord* : *Sanctifie Jehovah Sabaoth, and he shall be for a* ^{3. 6.} *stone of stumbling, and for a rock of offence* ; so did *Isaias* speak ; and his words ^{Isa. 8. 13, 14.} are by *S. Peter* and by *S. Paul* applied to *Christ*. *Whosoever shall call upon the* ^{1 Pet. 2. 7.} *name of Jehovah shall be delivered* ; so did the Prophet *Joel* foretell concerning ^{Rom. 9. 33.} the latter days ; and *S. Paul* accommodates it to the salvation obtained by con- ^{Joel 2. 32.} fessing the name of *Christ*. In *Malachy*, *Jehovah* saith, that *he would send his* ^{Rom. 10. 9,} *messenger to prepare his way before him* ; this according to the *Evangelists* interpre- ^{10, 13.} tation was verified in *S. John the Baptist* his preparing the way before our *Saviour*. ^{Mal. 3. 1.} Likewise, what *Esay* said ; *The voice of him that cried in the wilderness, prepare* ^{Matt. 3. 3.} *the way of Jehovah*, is by all the *Evangelists* applied to the *Baptist*, as the voice cry- ^{Mark 1. 2, 3.} ing, and to our *Saviour*, as the *Lord coming* : *Christ* therefore is the *Lord Jehovah*, ^{John 1. 23.} independent, and immutable in essence, and in power. ^{Lu. 7. 27. 3. 4.} ^{Isa. 40. 3.}

The word *Adon* also, which more immediately and properly doth signify *dominion* (and which put absolutely doth belong to *God*) is plainly attributed to our *Saviour*. *The Lord (Jehovah) said to my Lord (le Adoni,)* that is, *God the Father* ^{Psal. 110. 1.} to *Christ*, the *Son*, yet *Lord of David* ; as our *Saviour* himself expounds it. And, ^{Mark 22. 43.} *The Lord (ba Adon) shall come to his temple* ; so in *Malachy* 'tis prophesied con- ^{Mal. 3. 1.} cerning the coming of *Christ*. According to this notion was it, that *S. Thomas*, ^{John 20. 28.} being by our *Saviour's* resurrection convinced of his divinity, cried out, *My God, and my Lord* : In this sense it was, that *S. Peter* called our *Saviour Lord*, when he ascribed omniscience to him, saying, *Lord, thou knowest all things, thou know-* ^{John 21. 17.} *est that I love thee*. Upon this account, *S. John the Baptist* said, *He that cometh* ^{John 3. 31.} *from above is above all things*, which *S. Paul* expresth thus ; *The second man is the* ^{1 Cor. 15. 47.} *Lord from heaven*. So is *Christ*, as he is *God, our Lord*.

2. He is also our *Lord*, as *Man*, by the voluntary appointment and free dona- tion of *God* his Father ; in regard to the excellency of his Person, and to the merit of his performances. *God* did by gift and delegation confer upon him a supereminent degree of dignity and authority, with power to execute the most Lordly acts of enacting, of dispensing with, and of abrogating laws ; of judg- ing, of remitting offences ; of dispensing rewards, and of punishing transgressors. The Scripture is copious and emphatical in declaring this Point both in general terms, and with respect to particulars. *Let all the house of Israel* (saith *S. Peter*) ^{Acts 2. :} *know assuredly ; that God hath made him Lord, and Christ, even this Jesus whom ye*

John 17. 2. *did crucify. And, Thou hast given him power over all flesh : All things are deliver-*
 Luke 10. 22. *ed unto me by my Father : All power is given me in heaven and upon earth. The*
 Matt. 11. 27. *Father hath loved the Son, and hath given all things into his hand ; saith he con-*
 Mark 28. 18. *cerning himself : and, Being found in fashion as a man he humbled himself, and be-*
 John 3. 35- *came obedient unto death, even the death of the cross ; wherefore God also hath highly*
 13. 3. *exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name, that at the name of*
 Phil. 2. 8. *Jesus every knee should bow — and that every tongue should confess, that Jesus is*
 Eph. 1. 20. *the Lord : And, God raised him from the dead, and set him at his right hand in the*
 1 Pet. 3. 22. *heavenly places far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and*
 Heb. 2. 9. *every name that is named not only in this world, but also in that which is to come ; and*
 Apoc. 5. 12. *hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the*
 Mark 19. 28. *Church : And, We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the Angels for the suf-*
 25. 31. 26. 64. *fering of death crowned with glory, and honour : And, The Lamb which was slain is*
 Heb. 2. 7, 8. *worthy to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and blef-*
 Psal. 8. 7. *sing : And, When the Son of man sits upon the throne of his glory, ye shall sit upon*
 Dan. 7. 13, 14. *twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. In which places, as in others of*
 Heb. 2. 7, 8. *the same importance, it is signified generally, that beside the dominion, naturally*
 Psal. 8. 7. *belonging to our Saviour as God, there hath been conferred on him as man an*
 Dan. 7. 13, 14. *universal dominion over all things in regard to what as man he did and suffered ;*
 John 15. 10. *and that in him (as the Apostle to the Hebrews observeth and discourseth) that*
 12. 14. *hath been signally fulfilled, which the Psalmist acknowledgeth, and praiseth God*
 Matt. 9. 6. *for, in respect to man : Thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set*
 Luke 5. 24. *him over the works of thy hand, and didst put all things in subjection under his feet.*
 Acts 5. 30, 31. *In him also was accomplished the prophetic vision of Daniel : I saw in the night*
 Acts 11. 42. *visions, and behold one like the Son of man — And there was given him dominion,*
 17. 31. *and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations and languages should serve him :*
 Matt. 9. 6. *his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom,*
 Luke 5. 24. *that which shall not be destroyed. It is also particularly expressed of him, that to*
 Acts 5. 30, 31. *him as Man is committed a power legislative ; I say unto you, I command you, is*
 Acts 11. 42. *the stile he commonly used : and, The Son of man (saith he) is Lord of the Sabbath*
 17. 31. *(that is, hath a power to dispense with the observation thereof, or to abrogate*
 Matt. 9. 6. *the positive law concerning it ; which by parity of reason infers a general power*
 Luke 5. 24. *of constituting and rescinding Laws of the like nature.) The prerogative also*
 Acts 5. 30, 31. *of remitting sins was given him : That ye may (saith he) know, that the Son of man*
 Acts 11. 42. *bath power on earth to forgive sins, (then saith he to the sick of the palse) arise,*
 17. 31. *take up thy bed and walk : And, The God of our fathers (saith S. Peter) hath raised*
 Joh. 5. 22, 27. *Jesus, whom ye slew, and hanged on a tree ; him hath God exalted with his right*
 Matt. 16. 27. *hand to be a Prince, and a Saviour, to give repentance unto Israel, and remission of*
 Heb. 12. 22. *sins. The administration of justice and judgment he thus also hath : for he is,*
 Luke 1. 32. *ὁ κρίνων τὸν κόσμον, Ordained by God the judge of quick and dead ; God hath*
 Isa. 9. 7. *appointed to judge the world, ἐν ἀνδρὶ ὃ ὤρισεν, by the man whom he hath ordained :*
 Acts 2. 30. *The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son — and*
 Heb. 12. 22. *bath given him authority to execute judgment also, ὅτι υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου ἐστίν, because, or where-*
 Luke 1. 32. *as he is the Son of man : So also for the prerogative of distributing rewards, and*
 Isa. 9. 7. *inflicting punishments : The Son of man (saith he) shall come in the glory of his Fa-*
 Acts 2. 30. *ther with his angels, and reward every man according to his work. Thus by empha-*
 Heb. 12. 22. *tical expression it is signified, that Christ, as man, is our Lord, by God's appoint-*
 Luke 1. 32. *ment and donation. We may also consider, that our Saviour as the Son of David,*
 Isa. 9. 7. *and consequently by a right of succession, according to divine ordination, as*
 Acts 2. 30. *King of Israel (to the which all Christians are become Profelytes ; for ὡς ἐπὶ Παύλῳ*
 Heb. 12. 22. *Σιὸν ἔσται, Ye are Profelytes to Mount Sion, and to the city of the living God, the hea-*
 Luke 1. 32. *venly Hiernusalem, saith the Apostle to the Hebrews) is our Lord ; according to that*
 Isa. 9. 7. *of the Angel to the Blessed Virgin : He shall be great, and shall be called the Son*
 Acts 2. 30. *of the Highest ; and the Lord God shall give him the throne of David his Father ;*
 Heb. 12. 22. *and he shall reign over the house of Israel for ever and ever : Of the increase of his*
 Luke 1. 32. *government there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his Kingdom*
 Isa. 9. 7. *to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even*
 Acts 2. 30. *for ever : So Esay foretold of him ; and many like passages occur in other Pro-*
 Heb. 12. 22. *phets.*

3. He also considered as *θεοῦ υἱὸς* (as God and man, united in one Person) is plainly our Lord. For whatever naturally did appertain to God, whatever free-

ly was (in way of gift or reward) communicated to man, doth accrue to the person, and is attributed thereto in consequence of the union *hypostatical*, or personal. It was indeed by virtue thereof, that *the man Christ Jesus* became capable of so high preferments; wherefore most properly upon this consideration is Christ *the Lord of all*, as S. Peter styles him; *having all things (him only excepted, who did subject all things to him) put under his feet.* Acts 10. 36. 1 Cor. 15. 27.

4. If we also consider him as *Jesus*, our Saviour, that notion doth involve acts of dominion, and thence resulteth a title thereto: Nothing more becomes a *Lord*, than to protect, and save; none better deserves the right, and the name of a *Lord*, than a Saviour; wherefore those titles are well conjoined: *I am the Lord*, Isa. 43. 11. *and beside me there is no Saviour*, saith God in *Isay* of himself; and, *Him hath God exalted to be a Prince, and a Saviour to his right hand*, saith S. Peter concerning *Jesus*. Acts 5. 31.

5. Likewise if he be considered as *the Christ*, that especially implieth him appointed, and consecrated to sovereign dominion, as King of the Church: well therefore did the Angel express his joyful message when he told the shepherds: *I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people; for unto you is born this day in the City of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord*: and S. Peter well joined them, saying, *Let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.* Luke 2. 11. Acts 2. 36. Thus in all respects is *Christ* our *Lord*.

III. Let us also farther briefly survey the several grounds upon which dominion may be built, and we shall see, that upon all accounts he is our *Lord*.

1. An uncontrollable power and ability to govern is one certain ground of dominion; he that is endued therewith, it is necessary that we should submit to him, it is reasonable willingly to admit him for our Lord: Persons so qualified *Aristotle* telleth us have a natural title to dominion; as on the contrary, persons weak (in power or in wisdom) unable to protect themselves, and unfit to manage things, are naturally subjects and servants. This ground eminently agrees to him, as being by nature the Almighty God, who can do all things, whom nothing can resist; and also for that *all things are given into his hand*, all things are put under his feet. Hence he is most able to protect us; *the gates of hell cannot prevail against his Church; none can snatch us out of his hand; he is able to save to the uttermost them that come to God through him.* John 13. 3. Matt. 16. 18. John 10. 28. Heb. 7. 25.

2. To make, to preserve, to provide and dispense maintenance are also clear grounds of dominion; for what can we more justly claim dominion over, than over our own inventions and works; over that which we continually keep and nourish; over that which wholly depends upon us, and subsists merely by our pleasure? Since then *in him we live, and move, and have our being*; since we have derived all our being from him (our being natural as men, and spiritual as Christians) and are by him, *who upholdeth all things*, sustained therein; since as to all our powers, and in all our actions we depend upon him; for *without him we can do nothing*, and *all our sufficiency is of him*; he surely is our Lord, having an absolute right to dispose of us, to order us, and to use us according to his discretion and pleasure. We thence have reason to render that acknowledgment of the *Elders* in the *Revelation* to him: *Worthy art thou, O Lord, to receive the glory, and the honour, and the power; for thou hast created all things, and for thy will they are, and they were created*; to confess, and celebrate him as our Lord, for that, *Psal. 100. 3.* as it is in the *Psalms*, *It is he that made us, and not we our selves, we are his people and the sheep of his pasture.* * Thus by birth, and privilege of nature, as the Son of God, heir apparent, and consort of eternal Majesty; thus also as concurring with his Father in the divinest actions of creation and providence is *Jesus Christ*, the only Son of God, our *Lord*.

But beside these natural grounds of dominion over us, there are several others considerable, each of them according to the standing rules of justice and equity, sufficient to found a good title thereto. We (considering our selves as the sons of *Adam*, in that state wherein *Christ* found us, or wherein we should now be,

* Ο πρῶτος (ὡς ἔοικεν) καὶ κυριώτατος νόμος, πᾶσι σαφὲς δευδέν, ὅτι σῶζεν τοὺς ἀρχόντας καὶ φύσιν ἀπο διδωσι. Plut. in Pelop.

Περὶ αὐτοῦ γὰρ αἰεὶ πᾶσι κρείττονι καὶ φύσιν ἡγεῖται τὰ χεῖρον. Clem. Alex. Strom. 7. (pag. 506.)

Τὸ συνάμυνον φύσει περισσὸν ἄρχει φύσει, καὶ δεσπότην φύσει. Arist. Pol. 1. 1, 3, 4.

John 13. 3. Matt. 16. 18. John 10. 28. Heb. 7. 25.

Acts 17. 28. Heb. 1. 3. Col. 1. 17. John 15. 5. 2 Cor. 3. 5.

Apoc. 4. 11. Psal. 100. 3.

* Χειρὸς οὐσεί κρείττονι, καὶ βασιλεύει αἰεὶ ὡς, ἐχ' ὅτε ἀποτέλλεται ὡς ἄλλων γίνεται κρείττονι. ἔδ' ὅτε ἀρχὴ λαμβάνει τὸ εἶναι κρείττονι, καὶ βασιλεύει, ἀλλ' ὑπὲρ ὅτι αἰεὶ τὸτο καὶ τότε καὶ οὐρανοῦ ποιῶν καὶ λυτρωσάμενος πάντας γίνεσθαι καὶ ἔπος ζώντων καὶ νεκρῶν κρείττονι. Ath. Orat. 3. in Ar. pag. 385.

• if he had not vouchsafed to come and redeem us) had attempted to withdraw our selves from our due subjection to God by wilful rebellion and disobedience, we thence had forfeited the benefit of God's favourable protection and providence for our good : we had become Outlaws, dead in law ; (*dead in trespasses and sins*) we instead of being subjects and servants of God were become (or should have been) *aliens, and enemies to God by wicked works*, according to the natural *blindness of our minds not knowing* (or acknowledging) God ; in our affections estranged and averse from him, in our practice opposite to his holy will and righteous laws, we in a manner were got out of God's possession ; were in respect to him become imbecil and *lost* : we were *like sheep gone astray* out of the fold of his gracious care and governance ; we had got other Masters, and were come into other hands ; like those, who in the Prophet confess ; *O Lord our God, other Lords beside thee have had dominion over us*. The Devil had got us into his power ; we were *captivated* (or taken alive, as S. Paul phraseth it, ἐξοργισμένοι) *at his will* ; we were detained under wretched subjection, overpowered, and oppressed by him ; who therefore is called the *Prince*, and the *God of this world* ; to whose suggestions it hearkened, whose will it observed, whom it was prone even to worship and adore. The world also (whose *friendship is enmity to God*, which *all lieth in wickedness*) had prevail'd over us, so as *to walk according to it* ; to be governed by its corrupt principles, and vicious practices ; to be driven by its force, and drawn by its allure-ment into evil. We were captives, and slaves also *to the law of sin ruling in our members* ; serving *divers lusts and pleasures* ; being in our actions guided by a *carnal mind*, opposite to God and goodness ; swayed by sensual appetites, and hurried by violent passions to what is bad. This was the condition of mankind generally when Christ came, and would have so continued ; but out of it he came to deliver us ; by the merit of his blood, and power of his grace, to free us from the oppressions of all those usurping powers ; to recover and restore us into the propriety, possession and protection of God. He came to seek and to save that which was *lost* : to save us from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us ; to deliver us out of the power of darkness, and to translate us into his own Kingdom ; the kingdom of righteousness, peace and joy. So that he hath acquired us to himself ; we being now *περιποίησις*, an *acquisition* made by him (as S. Paul calleth us) and *λαός ἐκ περιποίησεως* (as S. Peter speaks) a *people by acquisition* peculiarly appertaining to him : and divers ways we have been acquired to him, as to our Lord.

3. He hath acquired us by free donation from God his Father : for *God hath given him power over all flesh* ; *God hath delivered all things into his hand* ; *God hath subjected all things under his feet*. Peculiarly God hath given unto him those who comply with his gracious invitations and suggestions ; his *sheep, that hear his voice, and follow him* ; them hath God given him, to govern them with especial favour, and keep them with a particular care ; *Whom* (saith he) *thou hast given me, I have kept* ; and, *This is the will of the Father that sent me, that of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing*.

4. Again, he hath acquired us by just right of conquest, having subdued those enemies, unto whom (partly by their fraud and violence, partly from our own will and consent) we did live enslaved and addicted : them he vanquished, *having spoiled principalities, and powers, and made a shew of them, openly triumphing over them*. Whence we rightly fall under subjection to him, as accessions to his victory ; having formerly belonged to his enemies, and having by his mercy been preserved ; he might justly have deprived us of liberty, and of life ; might have utterly destroyed us, or have detained us in woful misery, as dependants upon, and partizans with his foes ; our selves together with them being found in open hostility against him ; but according to his great mercy he saved us ; and did put us into a capacity of a free, comfortable and happy life under him ; *calling us to his kingdom and glory*. We therefore being *subacti potentia* (subdued by his power) become *jure subditi* (in right subject to him) [being *servati* we are made *servi* ;] being saved from death by him, we according to justice and reason become vassals to him, so that all our life should be devoted to his service ; that (as it is in the hymn *Benedictus*) *being delivered out of the hands of our enemies* (his enemies, and our enemies also no less in truth and effect) *we should serve him without fear*.

5. He hath also farther acquired us to himself by *purchase*; having by a great price bought us; ransomed us out of sad captivity and redeemed us from grievous punishment due to us. We, as heinous sinners and rebels, had forfeited our lives to God's law, and were sentenced unto a miserable death; we had lost our liberty, and were thrown into a grievous prison, fettered in guilt, lying under wrath, and reserved to punishment unavoidable; we were stripped of all goods, all comfort, all hope and remedy: such was the case of man, when he procured a redemption, a pardon, a deliverance and restitution for us; delivering up himself a ransom for us all; undergoing a punishment for our sins, discharging out debts, propitiating divine justice, acquitting us from all claims and pretences upon us; yea meriting for us a better state than we did ever before stand in; Thus he purchased his Church with his own blood: whence, as S. Paul argues, *we are not our own, for we were bought with a price.* In requital for such mercies and favours so unexpressibly great, we cannot, either in gratitude or justice, owe less than our selves to be rendred up wholly to his dominion and disposal; it is our duty therefore to be his subjects and servants; and it was indeed the intent of his doing so much for us, that we should be so; he did all *gratis* (most freely) as to any precedent motive beside his own goodness, but he would not do it fruitlessly, as to effect: *To this end* (saith S. Paul) *Christ both died, rose and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living. He died for all, that they, which henceforth live, should not live to themselves, but unto him which died for them: and, He gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works,*

Οὐ γὰρ ἐμαυτὸν, καὶ γὰρ, καὶ θάλασσαν
δύο, ἀλλὰ τὸ πάντα τῶν πνεύματων,
τὸ ἐαυτοῦ αἷμα καταθείς ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν ὅς-
ἐργασιν. Chrys. Ansg. 21.

6. He likewise acquired a Lordship over us by desert, and as a reward from God, futable to his performances of obedience and patience, highly satisfactory and acceptable to God. *For this the Father loves me, because I lay down my life, that I may take it again: He humbled himself, becoming obedient to the death of the cross; therefore also did God exalt him, and gave him a name above every name. For the joy that was set before him, he endured the cross, and having despised the shame, sate down at the right hand of the glory of God. We see Jesus for the sufferances of death crowned with glory and honour. He drank of the brook in the way, therefore he hath lifted up his head. Because he poured out his soul unto death; therefore did God divide him a portion with the great, and he did divide the spoil with the strong; as the Prophet expresseth it.*

7. We may add, that he hath acquired a good right and title to dominion over us, as our continual most munificent benefactor; by the great benefits he bestoweth on us, by the ample hire, and large recompence he pays us. He affords us a sure protection under him, and a liberal maintainance; high privileges, and ample rewards for our service: It is no *Egyptian* bondage that he would detain us in, requiring hard labour, and yielding no comfort or recompence, but it is a most beneficial and fruitful service. Christ hath promised to withhold no good thing from his servants; nothing requisite for the support or convenience even of this temporal life (for to them who seek the Kingdom of God, and its righteousness, even all these things shall be added, or cast in) but especially most inestimable precious recompences he hath promised, and will certainly bestow in spiritual and eternal blessings: *He will render to every man according to his works; to them, who by patient continuance in well doing seek glory, and honour, and immortality, eternal life; saith S. Paul: and, Being freed from sin (saith he again) and made servants to God, ye have your fruit unto sanctification, and in the end everlasting life: a fruit to sanctification, that is, all benefits conducing to our spiritual welfare here, and hereafter a life in perpetual joy and happiness. To them who have been diligent in performing their tasks, and improving their talents committed to them now for his Interest, and honour, he will one day say; Well done good and faithful servants enter into your Master's joy: and, Blessed (saith our good Master) are ye, when men shall revile you, and speak all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake; Rejoyce, and be exceeding glad, for great shall your reward be in heaven. Now he that is at such care and charges for us; who feeds and furnishes us so plentifully, who rewards our small pains, our poor works, our unprofitable services (such indeed we must confess all that we can do to be) with so high and bountiful wages, him surely most justly we should esteem, and most willingly call our good Lord, and Master.*

Καὶ ὁπότε ἡμεῖς οἰκταί. ἀναζητῶντες, αὐτὸς τὸς πῶλυς πρῶτον ἐρωτῶν, εἰ βέλονται ἡμῖν δουλεύειν ἢ οὐ καὶ Χρὶς τοῖς ἐπειδὴν, &c. ἢ καὶ καὶ ἡμεῖς καὶ ἡμεῖς ἡμεῖς ἡμεῖς ἡμεῖς, &c. Chrys. Ansp. 21.

8. Yea farther yet, our Saviour *Jesus*, is not only our Lord by nature, and by acquisition in so many ways (by various performances, deserts and obligations put on us) but he is also so by our own deeds, by most free and voluntary, most formal and solemn, and therefore most obligatory acts of ours. He is our Lord and King by election; we

finding our selves oppressed by cruel tyrants and enemies; groaning under intolerable slaveries, loaded with heavy burthens, plunged into grievous distresses, tormented with anxious fears, regrets and sorrows, had our recourse unto him, upon his gracious invitation, offering us deliverance, ease and refreshment under

Matt. 11. 28. his most equal and gentle government: *Come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest — Take my yoke upon you; — for my yoke is ease, and my burthen light*; so he was pleased to invite us; and so we did, or have at least seemed and pretended to undergo his yoke, freely submitting to his government: We have vowed perpetual allegiance and fealty to him, as to our lawful Prince; we have promised entire subjection to his will, and sincere obedience to his laws; we have engaged forsaking all things to follow him; to follow him as our Captain, and to fight resolutely under his banners against the common enemies of his glory, and our salvation. We did συμφωνεῖν (as it is in the *Parable*)

2 Tim. 2. 3.

4. 8.

Matt. 20. 2.

contract, and agree with him upon certain conditions and considerations, most advantageous to our selves, to be his faithful servants, and diligently to perform his work: We renounced all other Masters; yea resigned up all claim to any liberty or power over our selves; becoming absolutely devoted to his will and command: This we did at our Baptism, in most express and solemn manner, and in every religious performance we confirm our obligation; when we acknowledge his right over us, and our duty toward him; when we implore his protection, his succour, and his mercy; when we promise our humble respect and obedience to him: if our daily confessions do signifie any thing, if our vows and protestations have any truth or heart in them; if our prayers are serious, or praises are hearty, our communions have in them any thing of good earnest and sincerity; we do by them continually tie faster the band of this relation and duty toward him; he by our renewed choices, and consents, and promises, and acknowledgments doth appear to be our Lord. But let thus much suffice for explication of this point; or for considering upon what grounds *Jesus Christ*, the only Son of God is our Lord: Now for practical application of the point thereof.

Chrys.

Ansp. 21.

1. The general influence which this doctrine may and should have upon our practice is very obvious and palpable. If we are truly persuaded, that Christ is our Lord and Master, we must then see our selves obliged humbly to submit unto, and carefully to observe his will; to attend unto, and to obey his law, with

Luke 6. 46.

all readiness and diligence: for, *Why call ye me Lord, Lord; and do not the things that I say*, is the expostulation of our Lord himself, implying it to be a vain and absurd profession, an irrational and illusive pretence we make, when we avow and

invoke him as our Lord, but withall disclaim his authority in our practice, by

Matt. 7. 21.

slothfully neglecting, or wilfully disobeying his commands: *Not every one that saith Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doth the will of my father, which is in heaven*; that is, not he that makes loud and eager professions (crying Lord, over and over again) is in God's esteem a loyal subject, or faithful servant, or shall obtain the rewards assigned to such; but he that, although perhaps more sparing in words and pretences, doth really his duty, and performs the will of God. *Many* (saith our Saviour again) *shall in that day* (in

Matt. 21. 22.

Luke 13. 25.

that great day of final account and recompence) *say unto me, Lord, Lord; have we not in thy name prophecied, and in thy name cast out devils, and in thy name done many wonderful works? and then will I profess unto them, I never knew you, depart from me, ye that work iniquity*. Not only bare professions and acknowledgments

are insufficient, but even the fairest and most plausible actions done in the name of Christ will avail nothing, without real obedience to the law of Christ; even then, when such actions are performed, Christ doth not know them; that is, doth not esteem them his servants; the working of iniquity rendring them incapable of that name and privilege. Such persons do, as S. Paul speaks, *profess to know him* (or acknowledge him as their Lord) *but with their works they deny him*; who are

Tit. 1. 16.

disobedient, and to every good work reprobate (that is, upon trial found bad and false)

false) *they* (as S. Peter says) *deny the Lord that bought them.* Do ye not know 2 Pet. 1. 16.
 (saith S. Paul) *that to whom ye yield your selves servants to obey, his servants ye* Rom. 6. 16.
are, whom ye obey? And, Every one (saith our Saviour) *that doth sin, is the ser-* John 8. 34.
vant of sin: And, By whom (saith S. Peter) *a man is overcome, to him he is made a* 2 Pet. 2. 19.
servant, or enslaved (*ὑποτάσσεται*) 'Tis not what we say, but what we do; not what Παύλου & Ἰωάννου
 we would seem, but what we indeed are, doth really constitute, and truly deno- ἑνδεχόμενον
 minate us servants: we not only shall lose the rewards and privileges granted to ἡ ἀποδομις τῆς
 the servants of Christ, but we do even forfeit all claim to the very name if we ἀποδομις. Mar.
 disobey his commands, being indeed properly servants to those lusts which sway Lugd. Euseb.
 us; to that Devil, whose pleasure we fulfil; to that world, whose bad manners 5. 2. Mendacium
 we follow: we do but invade and usurp the name of Christians, if our practice is est Christianum se dicere,
 not conformed to the precepts of our Lord. Et opera Christi non facere. Ambr.

'Tis a lye to call ones self a Christian, and not to do the works of Christ, as S. Ambr. saith. *Omnino nihil prodest nomen sanctum habere sine moribus; quia vita à professione discordans abrogat illustris tituli honorem per indignorum actuum vilitatem.* Salv. de Gub. Dei 3. sub fin.

2. Indeed the consideration of this point doth clearly demonstrate to us the great heinousness of sin; how many follies, iniquities, basenesses and ingrati-
 tudes lye complicated therein: the madness of opposing irresistible power, and
 dissenting from infallible wisdom; the unworthiness of offending and abusing im-
 mense goodness; the injustice and disloyalty which are couched in the disobedi-
 ence of him, who by so many titles, and upon so many obligations is our Lord;
 the abusiveness of evacuating all his laborious and expensive designs in acquiring
 us; the levity and giddiness of disavowing him by our practice, whom we so
 often have acknowledged our Lord, and vowed entire subjection unto.

3. Again, if Christ be our Lord, then are we not our own Lords, or our own
 men; we are not at liberty, or at our own disposal as to our persons, or our
 actions: those rules of the civil Law, *that a servant can possess nothing of his own,* ὁ δὲ ἀλλοτρίου
that no profit can simply accrue to him, but all in result must go to his Lord; that ἑαυτοῦ ἀποκτήσασθαι
 he is reckoned no body in law; and the like, do most perfectly agree to us in re- ἀλλ' ἑαυτοῦ ἐκείνου. Arist.
 gard to Christ, who is upon so many accounts absolutely our Lord, infinitely Pol. 1. 3.
 more than one man can be to another. We consequently must not think to have
 our own wills, we must not attend our own business, we must not please our own τὸ δὲ ἑαυτοῦ
 appetites, or gratify our own desires, or enjoy our own pleasures, or follow our τὸ ἑαυτοῦ μὴ ὡς
 own fancies, or regard our own profits, or seek our own honour; we must not ἑαυτοῦ. Arist.
 undertake or prosecute any thing merely our own, or farther than doing so is Pol. 6. 2.
 subordinate unto, or consistent with the service, interest and glory of our Lord:
 otherwise we do constitute our selves the Lords and Masters, in effect renouncing
 and casting off him: if he be truly our Lord, it is his will, and word, that should
 be the rule of all our actions; which we should diligently attend unto, which we
 should readily observe; it is his business, that we should with especial care mind,
 and most earnestly prosecute; it is his advantage and credit, that we should pro-
 pound unto our selves, as the main aims of all our endeavours. Whatever we de-
 sign or undertake of moment, we should do it with this formal consideration and
 reference; doing it as the servants of Christ; from conscience of our duty to
 him, with intention therein to serve him, with expectation of reward only from
 him; according to those Apostolical precepts; *Whether we eat, or drink, or what-* 1 Cor. 10. 31.
ever we do, we should do all to the glory of our Lord: We must glorifie him with our 1 Cor. 6. 20.
 bodies, and our spirits, which are his: We must not live to our selves, but to him 2 Cor. 5. 15.
that died, and rose again for us: Since *whether we live or die* (that is, whatever
 action we set upon relating either to life or death) *we are the Lords;* we should di-
 rect all to his honour, profit and service.

4. If Christ be our Lord (absolutely and entirely such) then can we have no
 other Lords whatever, in opposition to him, or in competition with him; or other-
 wise any way than in subordination, and subserviency to him: No man (as he
 doth himself tell us) *can serve two Lords;* that is, two Lords having collateral, Matt. 6. 24.
 or equal authority; their injunctions will interfere, oppose or supplant one the
 other; our affections will incline to one more than to the other; at least we shall
 be detained in hovering suspense; our leisure, our care, our endeavour being
 employed in the service or attendance of one will force us to neglect and disap-
 point the other; *Ye cannot serve God and Mammon;* serving wealth (that is, ea-
 gerly

gerly affecting it, and earnestly pursuing it) is inconsistent with our duty to Christ; the like may be said of honour, of pleasure, of curiosity, of any worldly thing; for, *He that will be a friend of the world is thereby* (saith S. James) *constituted an enemy of God*; and if he thereby be made an enemy, he surely can be no good servant; a servant being (as the Philosopher calls him) *humilis amicus*, a meaner sort of friend; who performeth service out of good will and affection; like S. Paul, who discharged that high and laborious service, of preaching the Gospel, incumbent on him, and of that kindly necessity which he expresses, saying, *The love of Christ constrains me*; or as S. Peter enjoins, those particular servants of Christ (employed by him in teaching and guiding his people) to do their duty, *μη ἀναγκαστός, ἀλλ' ἐκούσιος*, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; or as S. Paul chargeth all servants, *μετ' εὐνοίας δουλεύετε*, to serve with good will, as to the Lord, and not to men. It is indeed the proper nature, and the necessary condition of this service, that we decline, forsake, renounce, detest all other obligations, all affections, all encumbrances, which may avert us from a close adherence thereto. *Whoever* (saith he) *he be of you, that forsaketh not* (or, who renounceth not, who biddeth not farewell to, *ὅτι ἐν ἀποδοσέτω*) *all that he hath, cannot be my disciple*; or my follower and servant: *If any man cometh after me, and do not hate his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brothers, and sisters, yea and his own life, he cannot be my disciple*; he cannot indeed truly and heartily be so, who in love and observance of Christ will not readily forsake and lose all.

5. Particularly therefore, if Christ be our Lord, we are thereby disobliged, yea we are indeed prohibited from pleasing or humouring men, so as to obey any command, to comply with any desire, or to follow any custom of theirs, which is repugnant to the will or precept of Christ: *If* (saith S. Paul) *I did yet please men* (that is, humour, soothe or flatter them, so the word *ἀρέσκων* doth import, *I were not the servant of Christ*; that is, I were not such in effect, I did in so doing not behave my self as a servant of Christ; as it becomes such an one, and as such an one is obliged to do. And, *Ye* (saith he again) *are bought with a price, be not the servants of men*, (or, *ye are not the servants of man*, so the words will bear rendring) that is, ye therefore do not, or ye therefore ought not to perform service to men, absolutely as such, or with ultimate relation unto them; but when ye lawfully, and allowably do it, ye do it out of conscience, and regard to Christ as his servants. We may indeed, yea in duty we must obey men humbly and willingly, diligently and faithfully in our stations, and according to our conditions, as we are placed and called in this world, either as subjects or servants; but we must do this in subordination to our principal, and supreme Lord; in obedience to his command, and with regard to his service; so we are taught by S. Paul: *Servants* (saith he) *obey your Masters according to the flesh with fear and trembling* (that is very respectfully and carefully) *in singleness of heart, as to Christ; not in eye-service, as men-pleasers, but as the servants of Christ; doing the will of God from the soul; serving with good will as to the Lord, and not unto men*: And, *Be subject* (saith S. Peter) *to every humane constitution διὰ τὸ Κεραυνόν, for the Lord*; (that is, out of conscientious regard, or affection to the Lord; because he is our Lord) *as free, and not having your liberty for a cloak of maliciousness, but as the servants of God*. Yea, *Whatsoever* (saith that wise instructor S. Paul again) *ye do, do it heartily as to the Lord, and not to men; knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive back the recompence of inheritance; for ye serve the Lord Christ*.

6. It is we see (which may be another improvement of this consideration) not only an engagement, but an encouragement to the performance of all duty; particularly to the performance of those hard duties (so contrary to natural will and stomach) cheerful obedience and submission to men; who often, as S. Peter intimates, are *σκολιοί*, crooked, or untoward, and harsh in their dealings with their servants; to whom yet upon this consideration he enjoins us willingly to yield obedience, no less than to the good and gentle; for that in this and all other performances of duty we do serve a most equal and kind Master, who will graciously accept our service, and abundantly requite it; a Lord that will not suffer his servants to want any needful sustenance, any fit encouragement, any just protection or assistance; who will not only faithfully pay them their promised allowance, but will advance them to the highest preferment imaginable. No man ever had
reason

reason to complain with them in the Prophet : *It is vain to serve God, and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinances ?* No : The Devil himself, with envy and regret observing the benefits and blessings which the pious man enjoyed in regard to his faithful service, could not but say ; *Doth Job serve God for nought ; hast thou not made a hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side ? Thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land.* No wonder, argued the detracting Spirit, and little thank or praise is due to a servant, whose service is so bountifully rewarded. Indeed our Lord is not only just and faithful so as to render unto every man *ιδιον μισθον κτλ* & *ιδιον κρονον*, a proper reward answerable to his proper pains ; but he is exceedingly, beyond expression, liberal in bestowing on his servants retributions infinitely surpassing the desert and worth of all their labours : for their small, weak, faint, imperfect and transitory endeavours (by all which he is indeed really nothing the richer, or the greater) he returneth blessings in nature, in degree, in duration immensely great, precious and glorious. He fails not here to feed them with food convenient, to cloath them decently, to supply all their needs, to comfort them in all distresses, to keep them in all safety, to deliver them from all evil ; he afterwards conferreth on them a Kingdom, an incorruptible and unfading Crown, a state of perfect joy and endless glory.

7. 'Tis a great comfort also for a Christian (how mean and low soever in his worldly condition) to consider the dignity and excellency of this his relation ; how great, and how good a Lord he serveth ; and the greatest Princes are his fellow-subjects (for, *He is the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords ; All kings shall fall down before him, all nations shall serve him.*) Yea, that the highest Angels are his fellow-servants (as the Angel in the Revelation told S. John.) That although his Lord be so high in power and glory above all, yet he is so gracious, as not to neglect or despise him ; but condescendeth to regard the lowest of his servants with equal care and favour as the highest : *He accepteth not the persons of Princes, nor regardeth the rich more than the poor ; for they are all the work of his hands,* said good Elisha ; and they all, we might add, are the price of his blood.

8. And as it is a comfort to the meanest, so it is no shame or disparagement for the greatest of men to serve such a Lord ; 'tis a relation in it self more worthy and honourable than the highest dignity or preferment in the world : to wear a crown, how rich soever, to command the whole earth, to possess all the land, and all the gold under heaven, are beggarly trivial and sordid things in comparison thereto ; a servant of Christ (the Apostolical stile) is a stile far more glorious than all those windy Titles, which the greatest Monarchs assume to themselves ; having such a place in God's peculiar regard and care doth exceed all privileges and advantages, all glories and dignities, which any person is capable of : Well therefore did S. Paul in respect to the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ his Lord esteem all such things (all worldly privileges and benefits) *as loss, and as dung* ; as things detrimental and despicable ; wisely did the Holy Apostles forsake all things (all their dearest relations, all their sweetest enjoyments, all their secular occupations) to follow such a Lord. (*Behold, saith S. Peter, we have let go all things, and have followed thee.*) Most just and reasonable are those sentences pronounced against those vainly proud, or perversely contumacious people, who are ashamed to obey him, or do reject his government : *Whosoever shall be ashamed of me, or of my words, him shall the son of man be ashamed of, when he comes in the glory of himself, and of his father, and the holy angels.* Them who proudly disdain to serve him here, will he with just and sad disdain reject hereafter from his face and favour ; yea, with dreadful vengeance will he punish their perverseness : *Those mine enemies (will he say) that would not have me reign over them, bring them hither, and slay them before me.*

9. S. Paul also maketh use of this consideration to press upon superiours their duties toward their inferiours ; their duties of equity, meekness, kindness, mercy, pity, and all humanity. *Masters (saith he) yield unto your servants that which is just, and equal, knowing that ye also have a master in heaven.* And, *Ye masters (saith he again) do the same things to them (perform the like good offices, shew the same good will to your servants) forbearing menaces, knowing that your Master also is in heaven, and there is no respect of persons with him.* Thus in Leviticus God commandeth his people not to rule over their servants with rigour, assigning

• this reason, for *they are my servants*, &c. And we know how our Saviour, as he doth commend and bleſs thoſe wiſe and honeſt ſervants who being appointed over his houſhold (that is, being placed in any ſuperiour rank or charge) do behave themſelves juſtly and kindly to their fellow-ſervants, *diſpenſing to them their food in due ſeaſon*; ſo upon thoſe who injuriouſly or rudely do beat or abuſe their fellow-ſervants; who are harſh, rigorous or unmerciful in exactions of debt, or in any other dealings toward them; he denounceth ſevere chaſtiſement. *A ſervant of the Lord* (that is, one employed by Chriſt in any office or charge) *muſt not fight, but muſt be gentle unto all*, (ſaith S. Paul;) ſuch indeed ſhould be the humility and goodneſs of Chriſtians one toward another, that the greateſt of them ſhould ſtoop to the meaneſt offices and expreſſions of good will to their brethren: *He* (ſaith our Lord) *that will be great among you, let him be your miniſter, and he that will be firſt of you, let him be your ſervant*.

10. The conſideration indeed of Chriſt being our Lord, is in general an inducement to charity, to all ſorts of charity. *We muſt* (ſaith S. Paul) *walk worthy of our calling, with all lowlineſs of mind, and meekneſs, with long ſuffering, forbearing one another in love, endeavouring to keep the unity of ſpirit in the bond of peace, becauſe we are members of the ſame body, whereof Chriſt is the head, and fellow-ſervants of the ſame Lord*. 'Tis an endearing and obliging relation; it becometh us, and concerneth us, being ſo of one family, to be courteous and gentle, kind and helpful one to another; to maintain peace, quiet and love one with another; it is a juſt duty and reſpect to our common Maſter, who loveth order and peace, who hateth confuſion and diſſention in his houſe; who is himſelf full of charity toward every one of his, and therefore hath enjoined it as the eſpecial duty, hath declared it to be the moſt diſtinctive character of his ſervants and followers: *Hereby* (ſaith he) *ſhall all men know, that ye are my diſciples, if ye have love one to another*.

11. Particularly this conſideration doth oblige us to exerciſe that piece of charity, and of juſtice, which conſiſts in forbearing raſh and harſh cenſure; which practice is not only very uncharitable, and unjuſt toward our brethren, but it is alſo a wrongful and arrogant encroachment upon our Lord himſelf, unto whom only the right of deciſion in ſuch caſes doth appertain; unto whoſe infallible and impartial judgment both they and we are obnoxious: *Who art thou* (ſaith S. Paul) *that judgeſt another's ſervant* (or domeſtick; *ἀλλότριον δικάζεις*) *to his own maſter he ſtandeth or falleth*. And, *Why doſt thou judge thy brother, or why doſt thou ſet at nought thy brother*: and, *We ſhall all be preſented before the judgment ſeat of Chriſt. There is* (ſaith S. James) *one Lawgiver, who is able to ſave, and to deſtroy; who art thou that judgeſt another?* 'Tis, we ſee, an invading our Lord's right and authority, without moſt evident and reaſonable cauſe, to cenſure or condemn our fellow-ſervants.

12. The conſideration of this Point our Saviour doth alſo improve as an engagement to imitate himſelf in the practice of all vertue and piety; eſpecially in the practice of charity, humility and patience. It is proper for a ſervant to follow and attend upon his maſter in all places, and in all performances; to compoſe himſelf in behaviour to the manners and example; to conform himſelf to the garb and condition of his Lord: Is it not abſurd and unſeemly, that the ſervant ſhould be more ſtately, or more delicate than his maſter; that he ſhould ſlight thoſe, whom his maſter vouchſafes to reſpect; that he ſhould reſuſe to undertake thoſe employments, ſhould ſcorn to undergo thoſe hardſhips, which his maſter doth willingly condeſcend unto? to ſuch purpoſe our Saviour diſcourſeth; impreſſing by this argument on his diſciples the duties of humility, charity and patience by him exemplified for that very end: *Ye call me, ſaith he, Maſter, and Lord; and ye ſay well, for ſo I am; if I then your Lord and Maſter have waſhed your feet, ye ought alſo to waſh one anothers feet; for I have given you an example, that ye ſhould do as I have done to you*. And having directed his diſciples to the patient enduring of reproaches, affronts and injuries put upon them, he enforces his precept by ſubjoining: *The diſciple is not above his Maſter, nor the ſervant above his Lord; 'tis enough for the diſciple to be as his Maſter, and the ſervant as his Lord*; that is, the ſervant in all reaſon ought to be very well content, if he find ſuch uſage as his Lord hath willingly and patiently undergone. And he thus again impreſſes theſe duties on them: *He that is greateſt among you, let him be as the younger, and he that*

that is chief, as he that doth serve; for whether is greater, he that sitteth at meet, or he that serveth? but I am among you as he that serveth. Yea S. John raiseth this consideration so high, that he saith thus: Because he laid down his life for us, we also ought to lay down our lives for the Brethren. Luke 22. 26. Matt. 20. 25. (87.) 1 John 3. 16.

13. Finally, for our satisfaction and encouragement we may consider, that the service of Christ is rather indeed a great freedom than a service; it is a reduction into a most desirable estate, wherein we fully enjoy that wherein liberty is defined to consist, *libertas autem est potestas, power of doing whatever* (as reasonable and wise men) we please our selves to do; wherein all things are lawful to us, excepting only such things as are unprofitable to us, or hurtful. What Aristotle made the character of a just Prince (whose government doth no-wise prejudice true liberty) that he doth not in his government chiefly aim at his own profit, but his Subjects good, is perfectly true of our Lord; he is indeed capable to receive no private benefit to himself, beside satisfaction in our welfare; all his laws and commands, all his administrations and proceedings are purely directed to our advantage. Even the statutes, which God gave to Israel by Moses are said to have been commanded for their good, not for any good that could accrue to God from their observance: much more are the laws of Christ purely such; conducing to the health, the safety, the peace, the comfort, the joy, the happiness both of our bodies and souls; of the present temporal life here, and of our immortal state hereafter: His religion is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come. Well therefore might S. James call the Law of Christ a perfect Law of liberty; well might our Saviour say, If the Son set you free, then are you free indeed. What the Stoicks vanted of themselves, the Christian modestly and truly may say, that he is the only freeman; 'Tis this Philosophy only, to which those words of Seneca may truly be applied: You must serve Philosophy, that you may attain true liberty: for, if to be above the reach of all considerable evil or mischief; if to be safe from all enemies, and secure from all impressions of fortune; if to have no reason much to fear, or much to grieve for any thing; if not to desire things base, or things immoderate; if to have an especial command over ones self is (as those Philosophers define it) properly liberty; then is he most free that serves our Lord. If to be rescued from the servitude of disorderly passions and base vices is the greatest freedom, then the good Christian chiefly doth enjoy it. A good man (saith S. Austin) although he serve, is free; a bad man, although he reign, is a slave; not of one man, but which is more grievous, of so many Lords, as of vices. Such indeed is the benignity of our Lord, that he treats his faithful servants rather as friends, than as servants; Ye are (saith he) my friends, if ye do whatever I command you; I call you no more servants. Yea he bears to them the affection of a brother, and affords them the honour to be so styled: Go (saith he, after his resurrection to Mary Magdalen) to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father, to my God, and to your God; and, *ἵνα πάντες ἀγαπᾶτε*, See ye what love the Father hath given us, that we should be called the sons of God. Qua est vera libertas? innocentia. E. pict. Deut. 10. 13. 6. 24. Neh. 9. 13. 1 Tim. 4. 8. Jam. 1. 25. John 8. 36. Philosophia servias oportet, ut tibi contingat vera libertas. Sen. Ep. 8. & 88. Non homines timere, non fortunam; nec turpia velle, nec immodica; in se ipsum habere maximam potestatem, &c. Sen. Ep. 75. Bonus etiamsi serviat, liber est; malus etiamsi regnet, servus est; nec unius hominis, sed quod gravius est tot dominorum quot vitiorum. Aug. de Civ. D. 4. 112. John 15. 14. John 20. 17. 1. 12. 1 John 3. 1.

• Full of so many practical uses is this excellent Point; the which I leave to be farther deduced by your meditation.

Now, The God of peace sanctifie you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ; to whom be glory and praise for ever. Amen.

Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost.

S E R M O N XXIII. The Incarnation of Our Lord.

MATTH. I. 20.

For that which is conceived in her, is of the Holy Ghost.

Τὸ ὅ ἐστιν αὐ-
τῇ γαυρεθῆναι,
ἐκ τοῦ ἁγίου
πνεύματος.



WITHOUT any preface, or circumstance of speech, we observe three particulars couched in these words. 1. The Incarnation of Jesus our Lord, implied by the word *τὸ γαυρεθῆναι*, that *which is conceived*, or generated. 2. The principal efficient cause of this Incarnation the Holy Ghost; by whose immediate operation, without any active influence of man, he was generated, *is of the Holy Ghost*. 3. The concurrence of the Blessed Virgin Mary, as the subject of that divine virtue and operation; he was *conceived in her*: Upon each of these particulars, being all of them considerable Points of that Faith, which we daily profess (and especially proper subjects of our meditation at this time) I shall reflect, observing somewhat profitable for our edification both in way of right knowledge, and in tendency to practice.

I. Our Saviour *Jesus* was conceived and born; that is, the only Son of God, our Lord and Redeemer, the same who *was from the beginning*, and did (as S. John in the entrance of his Gospel teacheth us) *from all eternity exist with God*, the eternal word of God, *by whom all things were made*, was *in the fulness of time* conceived and born; that is, had a production agreeable to the nature of man, becoming thereby truly and really a man, which wonderful mystery is in Scripture by various phrases expressed and implied; by the word being incarnated, that is, *being made*, or becoming *flesh*; *God being manifested in the flesh*; *The Son of God being sent in the likeness of sinful flesh*; *partaking of flesh and blood*; His *taking the form of a servant*, *being made in the likeness of men*, *being found in fashion as a man*, *assuming the seed of Abraham*: His *descending from heaven*, *coming forth from the father*, *being sent*, and *coming into the world*: *The day spring from on high* *visiting us*, *eternal life being manifested*; the result of what is signified by these, and the like expressions, that, The blessed and glorious person, who before from all eternity did subsist *in the form* or nature of God, being the Son of God, one in nature with his Father (the express image, or exact character of his substance) did by a temporal generation truly become man, assuming humane nature into the unity of his Person; by a real conjunction and union thereof to the divine nature, in a manner incomprehensible and ineffable. He did, I say, truly become man, *like unto us* in all things (as the *Apostle* saith) *sin only excepted*, consisting as such of all the essential ingredients of our nature; endued with all our properties and faculties, subject to all passions, all infirmities, all needs adherent, or incident to our nature and condition here.

He was not only (as the *Gnosticks* and some other *Hereticks* have conceited) in shape and outward appearance (as a spectre, deluding mens sight and fancy) but in most real truth a very perfect man; having a real body, figured and circumscribed as ours, compacted of flesh and blood, visible and tangible; which

was

John 1. 14.
1 Tim 3. 16.
Rom. 8. 3.
Heb. 2. 14, 16.
Phil. 2. 7, 8.
Joh. 3. 13, 31.
6. 33, 38, 50.
51, 58. 3. 17.
10. 36, 17, 18.
1 John 4. 2, 3.
9. Gal. 4.
Jo. 16. 27, 28.
Luke 1. 78.
1 John 1. 2.
Phil. 2. 7, 8.
John 10. 30.
14. 9.
1 John 5. 7.
Col. 1. 15.
2 Cor. 4. 4.
Heb. 1. 3. 2.
17. 4. 14.
Vid. Athan.
in tract. cont.
Apollinar.
Phil. 2. 8.
Εἷς ὅμοιος
ὡς ἡμεῖς
ἀλλ' ἁπλῶς
Rom. 8. 3.

was nourished and did grow, which needed and received sustenance, which was tender and sensible, frail and passible; which was bruised with stripes, torn with scourges, pricked with thorns, pierced with nails, transfixt with a spear, which was mortal; and underwent death by expiring its breath, and being disjoined from the soul that enlivened it. He had also a soul, endued with the same faculties as ours; with an understanding, capable of learning and improvement (for, he was, as man, ignorant of some things, which he might know; and *He grew*, Mark 13. 32. Luke 2. 52. 'tis said, *in wisdom and in stature*) with a will, subject and submissive to the divine will (for, *Let this cup, said he, if it be possible, pass from me; but however let not my will, but thy will be done*; and, *I seek not my own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me*) with several appetites, of meat, of drink, of sleep and rest, (for we read that he was hungry, that he thirsted, that he was weary) yea with various passions and affections (*φύσικα καὶ ἀσώβλητα πάθη*, I mean, that is, natural and irreprehensible passions) and these of the most troublesome and afflictive sort, such as zeal, pity, sorrow; the which were sometime declared by very pathetic significations, and are expressed in high terms: as upon occasion of his friend *Lazarus* his death, 'tis said, *He groaned in spirit and was troubled*: He then, and upon other occasions out of pity and sorrow, did weep; and ye know what excesses of sorrow, what anxieties and agonies, what tribulations, disturbances and amazements the *Evangelists*, using those very terms, describe him to have undergone at his passion; so that, as the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews* speaketh, *We have not an High Priest, that could not compassionate* (or sympathize with) *our infirmities, but who was in all points tempted* (or exercised and proved) *as we are, yet without sin*.

Πειλυντ'. Matt. 26. 38.
Ἀδμονεῖν. Matt. 26. 37.
Ἀγωνία. Luke 22. 24.
Τεταραχθῆναι. John 12. 27.
Ἐκστασεῖσθαι. Mark 14. 33.
Πειρασμοῖς. Luke 22. 28.
Heb. 4. 15.

So it appeareth, that the Son of God (co-eternal and co-essential with his Father) became the Son of man; truly and entirely partaking of the nature and substance of man, deficient in no essential part, devoid of no property belonging to us; exempt from no imperfection or inconvenience consequent upon our nature, except only sin, the which is not a natural so much as a moral evil, did not arise from man's original nature, but proceedeth from his abused will, doth rather corrupt than constitute a man.

Now concerning this great dispensation several inquiries and considerations may be made, concerning the manner of it, how therein God did assume our nature; or how therein God and man subsist united; concerning the reason of it whence it proceeded, and why it was designed; concerning the use and influence of it, which it should have upon our practice.

I. As for the first Point, the manner of this mystery, we may well in discretion and modesty answer with the *Schoolman*; *It is not in man to define what manner of communication this is, whereby the humane nature is communicated to the word*; we cannot indeed otherwise than by negation determine, not otherwise than by comparison explain it. No words perhaps, which we do use to signify our conceptions about these material and inferiour things, will perfectly and adequately suite to a mystery so much remote from the common objects of our knowledge, so far transcending our capacity; to affirm positively, that this wonderful Incarnation did come to pass, that this incomprehensible and ineffable union doth persist in this or that manner may be rash and dangerous; it would cease to be admirable, if we could fully conceive or express it: but this justly and safely we may assert, that whatever manner of conception or expression about it doth plainly derogate from the divine perfections, or is irreconcilably repugnant to the nature of things, or disagreeeth with the tenour of revealed truths evidently connected unto, or depending on this mystery; or which (either directly and immediately, or obliquely and by manifest consequence) doth contradict the language and doctrine of the Holy Scriptures, is to be rejected by us: whence we may for exclusion of errors and mistakes about this Point, with the Holy Fathers, and particularly with the great Council of *Chalcedon*, assert, that in the Incarnation of our Lord the two natures, *divine and humane*, were united, *ἀσυγχύτως, ἀτρέπτως,* αὐτομάτως, ἀχωρείτως.

Cujusmodi sit hac communicatio, qua natura humana communicatur verbo; non est hominis definire. Alenſ.

Syn. Chalced. Acts 5. (fin.) (pag. 340.)

I. The natures were, I say, united *ἀσυγχύτως*, that is, without any confusion, or commixtion; for such a way of blending would induce a third nature different from both, such as resulterth from the composition and contemperation of the elements

elements into a mixed body ; such a commixtion being supposed, our Lord would be neither God nor man, but another third kind of substance, such as must not without any ground or authority be supposed ; that would destroy, diminish or alter the properties of each ; which is unsound to say, and impossible to be, for the divine nature is not capable of any diminution or alteration : wherefore both natures in this mystery do subsist entire, distinct and unconfused, each retaining its essential and natural properties.

2. The Incarnation was performed *ἀτρέπτως*, that is without conversion or transmutation of one nature into another : The divinity could not be turned into humanity, for how could God (the eternal, self-subsistent, most simple and immutable *Jehovah*) as such, be any-wise changed or made, become infirm and passible, consist of body and soul, suffer and die ? Nor could the humanity be turned into divinity ; for how could that which did not subsist at all before the Incarnation, be therein converted into another thing ? why should our Saviour ever be called man, when his humanity was by translation into divinity destroyed ? why is it said, *the word was made flesh*, if the flesh was changed into the word ? to omit, how impossible it is, that one Substance should be transmuted into another, especially a corporeal into a spiritual, a finite into an infinite ; to omit likewise the many dangerous consequences of this position, and its inconsistency with many principal and plain doctrines of our religion, particularly the real passion and death of our Lord, which could not be incident to him otherwise than as retaining the true nature of man.

3. The natures were also joined *ἀδιακρίτως*, undividedly, that is, so as they have not distinct subsistences, or do not constitute two persons : for there is but one *Christ*, one person, to whom, being God, and being Man, are truly and properly attributed.

4. We must also understand the natures to be united *ἀχωρίστως*, inseparably ; so that they never are severed, the union is never dissolved ; the same person never ceasing to be both God and Man ; not even then, when our Lord as man did undergo death ; for he raised himself from the dead, he reared the temple of his own body, being fallen : as being God he was able to raise himself, as being man he was capable to be raised by himself ; the union between God and man persisting, when the union between humane body and soul was dissolved.

We might add, in farther exclusion of erroneous conceits, that this mysterious union was not made *καὶ μεσίσουν*, by assistance, or close presence only, nor *κατ' ἐνοίκησιν*, merely by inhabitation, nor *καὶ χάριν*, by relation, nor *κατ' ἀξίαν*, by estimation, nor *καὶ ἀρμονίαν*, by conformity, in will and practice, nor *καὶ συνουσίαν*, by consent ; as Nestorius and other heterodox Dogmatists anciently, in opposition to the Catholick exposition of this mystery, did imagine ; but it doth not seem worth the while to discuss those antiquated conceits, or with more subtilty to intrigue the Point.

Salmeron. apud Gerard.
in loc. Exeget.
p. 441. Bel.

As for illustration of it by comparison, I shall only (passing over divers more wide and improper resemblances ; such as those of *Bellarmino*, the union of a man's arm to his body, the incision of a bough into a tree, and the like) observe, that nature doth afford us one similitude very apposite for explication of this mysterious union ; which is the union of a man's soul and body, whereby he becometh one Person : The soul and body are two substances, very different in kind, in properties, in dignity : the one of it self, material, extended, divisible, passive and corruptible, lifeless and senseless ; the other immaterial, indivisible, incorruptible, self-moving, endued with life, knowledge, passion : both of them are also capable of separate existence, or of subsistence by themselves ; yet are these two, although in a manner difficult for us to conceive or comprehend, closely united together, and do concur to the making up a man ; and that so as to remain still in substance distinct, each retaining its natural properties, without any confusion, or any conversion of one into the other ; so also that from them the same man receiveth the denominations of corporeal and spiritual, of mortal and immortal : In a like manner (although in a degree more admirable and incomprehensible) are the divine and humane natures conjoined in our Lord ; for, as we hear in the *Athanasian Creed*, *As the reasonable soul and flesh is one man, so God and man is one Christ*. So much for the manner.

2. As for the reason why the Son of God did assume our nature ; the chiefest and clearest reason thereof was God's design thereby to exercise and demonstrate his

his immense goodness, mercy and pity toward us ; *So God loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son : In this the love of God was manifested, that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live by him.* Through the tender mercy of our God the day-spring from on high did visit us : It was *χρηστότης καὶ φιλανθρωπία, διὰ σπλάγ-* the benignity and philanthropy of God, which induced him to engage his Son upon such a debasement and exinanition of himself, that we thereby might be raised to a capacity of salvation. *John 3. 16. 1 John 4. 9. Rom. 5. 8. 8. 32. Διὰ σπλάγ-* *χρῆς ἐλέους* *Luke 1. 78. Tit. 3. 4.*

If we farther desire to contemplate the wisdom of God in this admirable proceeding ; and to know, why God among other means and methods, alike (for all we can know) possible to him, did chuse in this way to transact our redemption ; it may be answered, that it becometh us rather to adore the depth of God's wisdom herein, than to sound it, or to hope by searching to reach the bottom of it : yet some congruities of this method to the reason and exigency of things are in the Scripture intimated to us, and in some manner are discernible by us, sufficient to recommend the divine wisdom therein to our admiration ; Reasons may be assigned why our Redeemer should be *θεοῦ υἱός*, why God, why man. It well became God to stoop down thus, that as his goodness toward us was infinite, so the demonstrations thereof, to his glory and our benefit, should be answerably such ; which perhaps could not otherwise be, than by such a condescension : As a Prince could not make any other so great attestation of favour to his vassal, as by descending from his Throne, laying aside his Majesty, putting himself into a like condition, conversing freely with him, subjecting himself to the same laws and duties, enduring the like hardships and inconveniencies with him. *Nisi enim esset verus Deus, non adferret remedium, nisi esset homo, verus non praberet exemplum. Leo M. de. nat. Serm. 1.*

It was expedient that our Redeemer should be God, that he might be able by his power to save us ; to remove those huge obstacles that crossed our salvation, to subdue those potent enemies which opposed it ; to command and conquer nature, to vanquish the powers of hell, to abolish death in our behalf. *Eph. 1. 6. Εἰς ἕπαινον δόξης ἧς ἔχει τὸς αὐτοῦ.*

It was requisite that he should be God, that he might be able by his power to save us ; to remove those huge obstacles that crossed our salvation, to subdue those potent enemies which opposed it ; to command and conquer nature, to vanquish the powers of hell, to abolish death in our behalf. *Ἐν δὲ τῇ θεοῦ καὶ υἱοῦ.*

It was requisite that he should be the co-essential natural Son of God, that by the nearness of his relation to God, by the supereminent dignity of his Person, by the immense value of his merit he might conciliate God's favour to us, fully appease his wrath incensed against us, and satisfy his justice abused by our offences.

It was convenient, that his doctrine should carry with it the highest certainty, and strongest efficacy ; that his example should challenge the greatest regard and strictest imitation ; that his laws should have supreme authority, and with greatest advantage oblige us ; fit therefore it was, that he should be God, and have the character of divinity stamped upon what he said and performed.

The redemption and salvation of man did import an honour too august for any creature to be dignified with ; it was a work too difficult and mighty for any but God to atchieve ; it was not proper that any creature should be principal in managing an affair of such height and importance : needful and expedient therefore it was, that our Saviour should be God.

It was also requisite, upon many accounts, that he should be man : that by perfectly obeying God's commands, and submitting patiently to God's will as man, he might procure God's favour toward man ; that as man had deeply wronged and offended God, so man also should highly content and please him ; in S. Paul's language, that *as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners* (that is, were condemned and exposed to death, upon God's just displeasure for that one-man's transgression, back'd with the like in his posterity) *so by the*

obedience of one man many should be made righteous, (that is, all who would imitate his obedience should be absolved from guilt, exempted from punishment, and received into grace ; God being well pleased with and reconciled to mankind, especially to his followers, in regard to that man's dutiful observance of his will.) Decent it was that as man did approve, so man also should condemn sin in the flesh, that as man by wilful self-pleasing did incur misery, so by voluntary suffering he should recover happiness ; *He by his humanity did unite mankind in fraternity. Τὴν ἐχθρὰν ἐν τῇ σαρκὶ αὐτοῦ κατέλαυσεν. Eph. 1. 15. Ὅτι μέλη ἐσμὲν τοῦ σώματος αὐτοῦ, ἐκ τῆς σαρκὸς αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐκ τῆς ὀστέων αὐτοῦ. Eph. 5. 30.*

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It did (as the Apostle saith) become him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their Salvation perfect through suffering.

As the Devil
did overbear
man.—
Evæ advoca-
ta. Iren.
Heb. 4. 15.
5. 2.

Heb. 2. 17.
Ἀνθρώπου
ἱλαρὸς ὡς
ἐκ τοῦ
ἑαυτοῦ πα-
σθέντος ἐκ
ἡμῶν.
Procl.
in Conc. Eph.
108. 5.

It was also fit, that he who was designed to interceed for our welfare, to propitiate for our faults, to succour and relieve our distresses, should be tender of our good, and sensible of our needs; that he therefore should by nature and experience be disposed *συμπάσκειν* to *compassionate our infirmities*, and *μετενοεῖν* to be *gently affected toward us*, in respect of our ignorances and errors; whence *ἀφ' ὧν*, he (saith the divine *Apostle* again) according to the design appointed to him, and undertaken by him ought, or *it did behove him to be in all things like unto his brethren*, that he might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God; that he might propitiate for the sins of the people; for in that he hath himself suffered being tempted, he is also able to succour those that are tempted.

He was to be man also, for that by appearing in humane shape, visible and audible, familiar and agreeable to us, he was qualified for that great design of declaring God's will and intentions toward us in a more easie, less amazing, and more obliging way, than otherwise could have been: for that hence likewise he could, with more advantage, describe an exact copy of righteousness for us to transcribe; shewing us exemplarily how as men we should behave our selves; how we should moderate our sensual appetites, how govern our passions, how order and employ all the powers of our soul, and members of our Body; how pass through all conditions, and entertain all events befalling us; it not being indeed otherwise possible, that so lively and so sutable a pattern of transcendent charity, meekness, humility and patience could have been exhibited to us.

Acts 17. 31.
10. 42.

Fit it also was, that he who was to be appointed our Judge, substitute of the supreme Judge invisible, should be, as God (of perfect wisdom, and so able to discern all matters of fact, to distinguish all points of right; of perfect rectitude, so as never willingly to disscost from truth and equity) so also man: visible and audible to us, without surprising astonishment and terror; apt to screen us from the insupportable presence of God; endued with a natural tenderness of good will and compassion toward us, disposed to temper needful severity with competent mildness.

Ἀνακατα-
λαύσαντος,
Eph. 1. 10.
ὃς ὑποτάσσας
ἑαυτὸν
Col. 1. 20.
1 Tim. 2. 5.

In fine, it was most congruous, that he who was designed to *recapitulate and Reconcile* (as *S. Paul* speaketh) *all things in heaven and earth*, to be the great *mediator* and *peace-maker* between God and man, for the repairing God's honour, and dispensing his grace, for the *purchasing our peace*, and procuring our salvation, that he should be most nearly allyed unto both parties; that consequently if possible (and what is to God, the author of this œconomy, impossible?) he should be both God and man; Son to God, and brother to us; the same in nature with God, in kind with us. Such reason and wisdom is discernable in this dispensation.

Eph. 3. 19.

III. Now for the practical use of this doctrine (for it is not a doctrine merely speculative, and barren of fruit, or practical use) it should, *first*, have a powerful influence upon our minds, causing us, with high degrees of love and gratitude, to adore the infinite goodness of that God, who hath been pleased himself to stoop so low, that he might advance us from the lowest depth of meanness and wretchedness, to the highest pitch of honour and happiness, that we are capable of: What words can express, what thought can apprehend a favour so unconceivable, and ineffable? well might *S. Paul* call it *ὑπερέβηνσαν τὴν γνώσιν ἀγάπην*, *Love transcending all knowledge*: Well may heaven admire, and earth be astonished, and hell tremble at the disclosure of such a mystery, at the accomplishing such a miracle of grace, and mercy; that the sovereign majesty of heaven, the eternal Lord of glory, the worlds great maker, the only Son of God, and heir of all things, should become a poor, small, weak and frail man; should dwell in a tabernacle of flesh, should converse with silly, wretched and frail mortals here, should be exposed to want, disgrace and pain: *ὡς βάθος*, O depth of goodness, and mercy unsearchable! if this will not, What consideration can raise us, what benefit can affect us? What prodigious ingratitude will it be, to be regardless, or insensible of kindness so wonderful.

2. Another great use of this point, is to engage us, as universally to all obedience, so particularly to the duties of humility, of patience, and of charity. Did the Son of God thus willingly submit, and so abase himself; and shall we then be refractory, shall we exalt our selves; shall we refuse any appointment, or repine at any proceeding of God? Did he from the highest pitch of glory supercelestial,

volun-

voluntarily descend into this gloomy region, and state of ignoble obscurity; did he, abandoning immense wealth, freely embrace extream poverty; did he gladly sequester himself from those ineffable joys above, to converse with sorrow and sadness here, in this valley of tears, for God's sake, and ours; And shall we be unwilling to do any thing for God's sake, or to part with any thing for him? to these purposes doth S. Paul apply the consideration of this point: *Let* (saith he) *the same mind* (the same humble, patient, meek, charitable mind) *be in you, which was in Christ Jesus; who being in the form of God — emptied himself, taking upon him the form of a servant; being made in the likeness of men, and being found in fashion as a man, humbled himself, becoming obedient unto death:* It was the greatest argument and instance of humility, patience and charity, that could be, for him, that did exist in the form of God, thus to debase himself to partake of our nature, and submit to our state: and *know* (saith that Apostle again) *the Grace* (or graciousness) *of our Lord Jesus Christ, that being himself rich, for your sake he became poor* (being rich as God, and Lord of all things, he put himself into this mean and poor condition of man) *that ye, through his poverty, might be rich;* it was a consideration surely most proper to his purpose of inciting unto charity.

3. The consideration of this point should raise our minds to a sense of the dignity of our nature, accompanied with dispositions of heart, and deportments of life answerable thereto: By our Lord's Incarnation our nature is so advanced, that we become nearly allyed to God, of the blood-royal of heaven, in this respect over-topping all the creation of God; so that hereby (as the Apostle to the Hebrews discourseth) that of the Psalmist was verified, concerning man; *Thou hast crowned him with glory, and honour, and hast set him over the works of thine hands; thou hast put all things under his feet:* the Angels themselves cannot boast of such an honour; for *he took not the Nature of Angels, but he took the Seed of Abraham:* Being therefore so highly dignified, we should have a mind suitably great and noble, loving, delighting in, aiming at the most excellent things, void of base cares, of sordid desires, of unworthy designs; we should in all our conversation, demean our selves worthily and decently, like the brethren of Jesus, and children of God; that we may not *disparage and disgrace this illustrious alliance. As our Lord did vouchsafe, in most condescensive Grace, to resemble us, so should we, with a generous and honest ambition, aspire to resemble him; as he stooped to humanity, so let us rear our selves to a kind of Divinity, in purity of mind, and sanctity of life; so S. Gregory Nazianzene exhorteth; *Let us* (saith he) *be as Christ, since Christ is become like us; let us, for his sake, be Gods, seeing he is become Man for us.*

ὡς ἡμεῖς. Ἐπειμύμεθα δεῖν δι' αὐτῶν, ἐμυδάμεν, ἡμεῖς δὲ ἡμεῖς ἀνδρώμεθα. Greg. Naz. Orat. 41.

4. The consideration of this point should fill our hearts with spiritual comfort, and joy: There never can be a greater occasion, or juster cause of rejoycing, than this, that our Lord is born and come: It is signally *Evangelium*; good tidings; never news more welcome hath come into the world; never report more grateful was heard by mortal ears: It is news from heaven, and the best that ever came thence; *Behold* (said the Angel that brought it, and a Message it was most worthy the mouth of an Angel) *I tell good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people;* news, at which all heaven was pleased, and ravished with joy, breaking presently forth into Hymns of Praise and Congratulation; *There was with the Angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, Glory be to God on high, on earth peace, and good will to men.* In this, if we mark it, all the grand causes of extraordinary joy and festivity do conspire.

Is the birth of a Prince ever by honest Subjects entertained and celebrated with joy? Behold a Prince born to all the World; a Prince that cometh to rule mankind with perfect equity and clemency; to bring with him all peace and prosperity; to achieve the most noble exploits, that could be undertaken in our behalf; to protect us in most assured safety, to defend us from all evil, to subdue and destroy all the enemies of our welfare, to rescue us from the greatest slaveries and miseries, to settle us in perfect happiness; He bringeth *salvation from our enemies, and from the hands of all that hate us; so that being delivered from the hands of our enemies, we might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of our lives:*

Apoc. 6. 2.
Luke 11. 22.
John 16. 33.

Is Victory glorious and joyful? See the invincible warrior is issued forth into the field, *conquering and to conquer*; he that shall quell, disarm, and rife *the strong one*, that shall rout all the forces of hell, that shall defeat sin, and slay death it self, that shall subdue the world, and subject all things to himself; The *captain of our salvation* appeareth, triumphing in humility; the great blow is given; the Devil's pride and envy are abased; all the enemies are amased, are daunted, are confounded at his presence; they cannot stand, they break, they scatter, they flee before him.

Eph. 2. 17.
Acts 10. 36.

Is the publishing of Peace acceptable? Behold eternal peace between heaven and earth, a general peace among men, a peace of conscience between man and himself, is now established and proclaimed: the illustrious Ambassador, the noble hostage, the infallible pledge thereof is arrived; *Preaching peace to them that are far off, and to them that are near.*

In natali Domini quasi in nuptiis spiritualibus sponsa sua Ecclesia Christus adiunctus est, tunc processit sponsus de thalamo suo, hoc est verbum Dei de utero virginali. Aug. de Temp. Serm. 2.

Is recovery of liberty comfortable unto slaves and captives? Behold the Redeemer is come, the great ransom is laid down sufficient to purchase the freedom of whole worlds: innocence appearing in humane nature hath unlocked the prison of sin, in which we were closely detained, hath bro-

Gal. 3. 22.
Luke 4. 18.

ken the shackles of universal guilt, which sorely pinched mankind: he is come, who is anointed to preach (*αἰχμαλωτοῖς ἀφῆσιν*) *dismissal to the captives.*

Is the coming of a good friend to be congratulated? Behold, the best friend to all mankind (bringing with him most wholesome advice, most needful succour, most seasonable consolation) is arrived to visit us, and dwell with us.

Is it a comfortable thing to be graced with honour? What greater honour could mankind be dignified with, than this of receiving the Son of God into its kind, and kindred? What could more advance, and adorn us, than this high relation?

Is mirth seasonable to the day of Marriage? Behold heaven and earth this day are coupled, divinity is espoused to humanity, an eternal indissoluble knot of amity, of unity, is tyed between God and Man; the great Bridegroom is come forth clad in his nuptial garment of flesh, ready to wed the Church, his beloved spouse.

Luke 1. 78,
79.

Isa. Co. 1.

Is the Sun's rising (after a long, dark and cold night) chearful and comfortable? See, the *Sun of righteousness is risen, with healing in his wings*; dispensing all about his most pleasant light, and salutary influences: *The day-spring from on high hath visited us*, diffusing an universal light upon the souls of men, dispelling the night of ignorance and error, *shining out to those which sit in darkness, and the shadow of death, and guiding our feet in the way of peace*; *Arise, shine, for thy light is come and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee, &c.* Never did heaven with so clear and serene a countenance smile upon earth, as it did this day, when

Apoc. 22. 61.
'Ασπρὸν λαμ-
πρὸς ὡς ὁπ-
σεῖρος.

this super-illustrious luminary (this *bright morning star*, as he is called in the *Apocalypse*) did spring up above our *horizon*. From this auspicious day commenced the revocation of that fatal curse, by which we were exiled from Paradise, condemned to death, exposed to hell; the reinstating us in a condition of hope, in a capacity of happiness; the return of life and joy into this region of corruption, and disconsolateness: This is the day, which *all nations desired*, and earnestly longed for (with an implicate sense) which the good Patriarchs foreseeing did rejoyce; which the Prophets in so magnificent strains did predict and prefig-nify. In our Lord's nativity all mankind was in a manner born, or did revive; was restored from a manifold necessity of dying; from lying dead in the guilt, and under the power of sin; from having our bodies irrecoverably dissolved by corruption, and our souls immersed into that *second death* of endless misery. It is in effect therefore the Worlds nativity that we celebrate, annexed to that of our Lord; the beginning of the new, better, spiritual and eternal life to men: all reason therefore we have upon this consideration heartily to rejoyce: How extremely stupid and senseless are we, if the apprehension of goods so many, so excellent hence accruing to us doth not inspire our hearts with a grateful chearful-ness? *This is the day which the Lord hath made, let us rejoyce and be glad therein.*

Psal. 118. 24.

Conceived by the Holy Ghost. Born of the Virgin Mary.

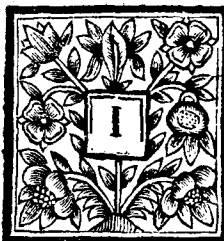
S E R M O N XXIV.

The Incarnation of Our Lord.

MATTH. I. 20.

For that which is conceived in her, is of the Holy Ghost.

*To be in the
the presence of*



IF every circumstance of our Lord's wonderful Incarnation deserveth to be considered, as affording matter of good instruction, and serving to excite devout affection; then surely the principal causes and ingredients thereof may demand a special regard from us; such are those which are couched in this Text; The efficiency of the *Holy Spirit*, by which it was accomplished; the concurrence of the Blessed Virgin *Mary*, as the subject, in whom the divine virtue did work it; upon which two particulars we shall reflect in order.

I. It was the *Holy Ghost*, by the singular virtue and operation of whom, without intervention of any man, or earthly Father, the *Blessed Virgin* became impregnated and did conceive. *Joseph* was, *as evouλem*, in outward esteem, the Father of our Saviour (for *Is not this*, said they, *the Carpenter's son? Is not this the son of Joseph?*) the modesty of his Holy Mother being preserved from misprision under the shroud of wedlock, during the time that by God's order the mystery and truth of things was to be concealed from general notice, *until the day of his being shewed*, and *manifested to Israel*; but God only was in truth his Father, his Incarnation being performed by the miraculous efficacy of God's Holy Spirit; upon which account (beside his eternal generation) he was also the Son of God; for *therefore* (said the Angel to his Mother) *that holy thing which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God.* Luke 3. 23. Matt. 13. 55. John 6. 42. Luke 4. 22. Mark 6. 3. Luke 1. 80. John. 1. 31. Luke 1. 35.

The matter of fact was well known to *Joseph* by Revelation, and to the Blessed Virgin her self by her conscience also; and by them it was attested to the Holy Apostles; their attestation being seconded by the Miracles of our Lord, together with all the potent arguments which confirm his Doctrine: Nor do we find, that even the adversaries of our Lord did ever offer to impeach his Parents of imposture, or did any-wise trouble them about this report coming from them. And it is so clearly, and fully affirmed in the *Gospels*, that it is prodigiously strange that here have been lately some (called *Josephites*) who have questioned it, upon weak pretences of discourse; whom we cannot otherwise consider, than as intolerably audacious perverters of Scripture, or subverters of its authority and use; for surely nothing there can be deemed certain, if this point is not. The fact therefore we must take for granted; and for our farther instruction about it we shall consider three particulars; the *manner* of it, the *reasons* for it, the *practical use*, whereto it may be applied. *Apud Episcopum.*

1. The manner of that operation, whereby the Holy Ghost did effect the humane generation of our Lord, is by the Archangel *Gabriel* expressed to be from the *supervention of the Holy Ghost*, and the *divine power over-shadowing the Blessed Virgin*; the which words being of so general interpretation, and as to precise meaning

meaning so little intelligible by us, may well serve to bound our curiosity, and to check farther inquiry. Some indeed (as the followers of *Valentinus* and *Apolinarinus* of old, as *Mennö*, *Servetus*, and others of late) have been so bold as to determine, that the Holy Ghost did bring from Heaven a body, which he did convey into the Blessed Virgin; or that our Saviour's flesh was formed of a divine seed, from the substance of God himself; or that in his conception the Holy Ghost did create, and impart somewhat of matter; but it is enough to say, that these are rash and groundless conceits; The holy Fathers, having weighed and discussed such imaginations, to prevent dangerous or misbecoming thoughts and speeches, about a point of so sacred nature, more soberly do teach, that our Saviour was conceived by the Holy Spirit, not *σπέρματιώς*, *seminally*; but *δυναμικώς*, *operatively*; not *ἐκ συνουσίας*, *by copulation*; but *ἐκ δυνάμεως*, *by power*; not *de substantia Spiritus S.* *of the substance of the Holy Ghost*; but *de potentia*, *by the virtue of it*; and farther than this, say they, *Generationem ejus quis enarrabit*; *Who can declare his generation*, or exactly describe the manner of a performance so very wonderful and sublime; to the which no experience doth furnish any event like or comparable? When therefore it is said, that the conception, or generation was *ἐκ πνεύματος ἁγίου*, *of the Holy Ghost*, the Preposition *ἐκ* is to be taken for the same with *ἐκ*, or *ἐκ* (as it is very commonly used) denoting not matter out of which, but efficiency by which the effect was derived. But,

2. Why was our Saviour conceived by the Holy Ghost? Divers reasons for it may be assigned.

1. It was needful for assuring the Divinity of our Saviour, or his being the Eternal Son of God. That the *Messias*, the Redeemer of the World should be the Son of God was necessary, according to the purpose of God, the ancient predictions, the general opinions and expectations of God's people (often implied in the *Gospels*;) Accordingly such he was as the coeternal Word in his divine nature; but it was requisite that he should also be such according to his humane nature; that by his extraordinary generation, as Man, his other more sublime generation (so much transcending humane conceit) might be more credible, and the world might be convinced of his divinity; for men hardly would have been capable to believe him more than a man, whom they saw born in the common way of men; *Is not this the son of Joseph*, was an argument which they urged against him, when they spake about his *descent from heaven*, *John* 6. 42. and caused them to admire, when they observed the power of his miracles (*Matt.* 13. 55.) and the wisdom of his discourse (*Luke* 4. 22.) but easily might they be induced to admit a mystery, which was countenanced by so grand a miracle, as the birth of a child, by the divine power, without a Father.

2. This was the most fit way of accomplishing that so necessary conjunction of the divine and humane nature: A work of such grandeur and glory, of such grace and goodness, was not to be achieved by any other agent, than by him, who is the substantial virtue and love of God; by whom we see all extraordinary and most eminent works to have been managed, to whom commonly the *μεγαλὴ δυνάμις*, the majestick and magnificent things of God are ascribed; for in the creation of the world, it was *the Spirit of God* which moved upon the waters, forming things, and impregnating them with all kinds of life and vigour natural; He it is, to whom those signal works of providence, the revelation of divine truth, the prediction of future events, the performance of miracles, the renovation of mens minds, and reformation of their manners in a peculiar manner are attributed; So likewise to him this incomparably supernatural, glorious and important act was most properly due.

3. It being necessary that our Saviour should be consecrated to his great functions, and perfectly sanctified in his person, as Man; And those performances (according to the mystical œconomy of things among the divine persons) being appropriated to the Holy Ghost, the natural spring of all derived sanctity; his efficacy must needs intervene to this purpose: If *Jeremy*, *S. John Baptist*, and *S. Paul* (persons designed for offices and employments in dignity; in consequence so far inferiour) were sanctified; and separated by the Holy Ghost from their mothers womb; In how more excellent kind, and degree, was it requisite that he should be sanctified thereby, who was sent into the world to redeem, and purify it from

Damasc. 3. 2.
Just. Mart.
Apol. 2.
Aug. de Temp.
Serm. 6.
P. Leo de
Nat. Serm.

Psal. 2. 7, 12.
1 Chr. 12. 10.
2 Sam. 7. 13.
Psal. 80. 27.
Joh. 1. 34.
49. 11. 27.
6. 59.
Mat. 16. 16.
Mar. 14. 61.
26. 63.
Matt. 8. 29.
Mark 1. 24.
Luke 4. 34.

Acts 2. 11.

Jer. 1. 5.
Luke 1. 15.
Gal. 1. 15.

John 10. 36.

the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, thou blasphemest, because I said I am the Son of God: whereas the style of Gods was given to persons devoted to far meaner services.

4. It is needful, that the humane nature, which God did vouchsafe so highly to advance, by assuming it to a personal conjunction and union with himself, should be clear from all stain, and pollution; such as in ordinary propagation doth adhere to our *sinful flesh* and corrupt nature; That he whom God even as man would so dearly love, and so entirely be pleased with should be void of the least inclination to iniquity, or impurity; for (as the *Psalmist* telleth us) *God is not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness, neither shall evil dwell with him; He is of purer eyes, than to behold evil; and cannot so much as look upon iniquity;* How then would he receive any defiled thing into so near an union, into so dear a regard, into so full a complacence: He therefore was to be thoroughly sanctified; and thence it was needful that his Humanity should issue from the fountain of Holiness, God's most Holy Spirit.

Futurum hominum salu-rem talis oratus decebat, qui in se haberet humana substantia natura, et humane carnis inquinamenta nesciret. Leo i. de Nativ. Ser. 2. Rom. 8. 3. Psalm 5. 4. Hab. 1. 13.

5. It in like manner was necessary, that he who was ordained to appease God's displeasure, and fully to reconcile him toward us, to expiate all our offences, thoroughly to redeem mankind from the guilt, and from the power of sin; who with absolute authority was to teach, to exemplify, to command all righteousness, should himself *know no sin;* Such an high Priest (as the *Apostle* saith) *became us, who was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners; who had no need first to offer up sacrifices for his own sins:* The sacrifice expiatory for our offences was to be a *lamb without blemish, and without spot:* Whence he was to be fully sanctified; and to become *ἁγιος*, that *holy thing* (absolutely) as he was termed by the celestial messenger: Whence from the source of sanctity, the Holy Ghost, whose proper name doth import Holiness, whose proper work it is to sanctify, he was to derive a perfect sanctity and purity in his sacred conception.

2 Cor. 5. 21. Heb. 6. 26, 27.

1 Pet. 1. 19. Luke 1. 35.

6. We may add, as an observable point, the analogy, or apposite resemblance thereof, between the conception of our Saviour for us, and his *formation in us;* his natural generation and the spiritual regeneration of Christians; his becoming our brother in the flesh, and our being made his brethren in the spirit; both being effected by the same agent: As Christ was made true man, and partaker of our nature, so we become true Christians, *and consorts of the divine nature* by the operation of the same divine Spirit: As he by the dispensation of God, so we by his grace *are born not by blood, nor by the will of flesh, nor by the will of man, but of God;* Hence doth accrue a new relation, and we become his brethren, not only as he was made like to us, but also as we become like to him; and are *begotten of God*, by the same heavenly virtue, the same *incorruptible seed.*

Gal. 4. 19.

Θείας φύσεως κοινωνοί.

2 Pet. 1. 4. Eph. 1. 10.

John 1. 13.

1 Pet. 1. 23.

1 John 3. 9.

It may indeed be an admonition to us to labour after this spiritual conception, which will render us conformable to our Lord, and far more truly allyed to him, than even his partaking our nature hath done; And indeed without that spiritual one, this carnal alliance will not signify any thing of benefit to us; it will little profit us, that he was born in the flesh, if we are not *born of the spirit;* without which generation *we cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.*

2 Cor. 5. 16. John 3. 3, 5.

3. The proper application of this point is to engage us on a thankful adoration of the divine goodness and wisdom; so fully, so fitly carrying on that infinitely gracious work of our redemption; all the divine persons of the Blessed Trinity in a particular manner conspiring, as in the designation so in the execution thereof; The Father mercifully designating and sending his Son; the Son willingly and gladly condescending to come; the Holy Ghost effectually bringing him into the world; to which Blessed Trinity therefore we should render all humble reverence, and hearty praise: And so much for the first particular observed in the Text.

II. The next is, the concurrence of the Blessed Virgin *Mary* to our Lord's Generation; that *which is conceived* (or generated) *in her.*

τὸ ἐν αὐτῇ γεννηθέν.

The being generated (*τὸ γεννᾶσθαι*, here) we may suppose to respect, or to express his whole humane generation; with the parts and progress thereof; implying on the Virgins part all that she as a mother did confer thereto; wherein therefore are comprehended the following particulars;

1. His conception of her substance, whence he is called *the fruit of her womb;* and a *rod* (that is, a branch, or twig) *sprouting from the stem of Jesse;* and *Behold,* said the Angel, *thou shalt conceive in thy womb.*

Luke 1. 42.

Isa. 11. 1.

σπλήνη ἐν

2. The *gospel* Lu. 1. 35.

2. The nutrition, accretion, and entire conformation of his body, out of her blood and substance; whence her womb is said to bear him (*blessed is the womb that bare thee*) to have been ** gravidated*, or great with child, the which as it grew, did swell her womb visibly; so that ** she was found*, or observed; by apparent signs, *to be with child of him*, or to have him in her womb.

3. His nativity it self, or exclusion into the open world; which is thus expressed by the Evangelist; *The days were accomplished that she should be delivered, and she brought forth her first born son.*

Whatever therefore any mother doth confer to the entire production of a child, is to be attributed to the Blessed Virgin; whence she was truly and properly *the mother of our Lord*, and is accordingly often so called in the Gospels; whence also she hath been in the Church defined to be and commonly styled *θεοτόκος*, the bearer and mother of God; that is, of him who is God; that term asserting the Divinity of Christ, and the Unity of his person [against Nestorius and his partizans; who said, that the Virgin was not properly *θεοτόκος*, but *χρηστοτόκος*; and that He who was born, was not God, but *ἀνδρώτης θεοφύτης*, a man carrying God, or divinity in him.]

Nest. ad Cyrill. in conc. Eph. Cyrill. Epist. ad Nest.

Now for our instruction and use we may resolve the word *her* into three respects distinctly considerable; He was born of her, a Woman; He was born of her, a Virgin; He was born of her, *Mary*; each of which respects is pregnant with matter observable: He was born of a Woman, that was highly needful to be; of a Virgin, that was very requisite; of *Mary*, that doth involve divers circumstances of importance.

1. Our Saviour was born of a Woman.

The *Valentinian* Hereticks of old did opine, that he was only born through a woman, or did merely pass through her, as liquor doth pass through a vessel: But that is a great error; for He was born in her, and of her; in our Text it is *ἐν αὐτῇ γενετή*, *generated in her*; which in sound expresseth no more, than her containing him when conceived, but according to the force of the *Hebrew* particle *ב* (*Be*) answering to *ἐν* here, is apt to signify more; and must be taken to do so in conformity to parallel expressions; as that of *S. Paul*, *God sent forth his son born ἐκ γυναικός*, *of a woman*; and that of *S. Luke* (in the best Copies, followed by our English Translators) *τὸ γυνώμενον ἐν σοι*, *the Holy thing that is born of thee, or out of thee.*

Gal. 4. 4.

Luke 1. 35.

Indeed of a woman he was born, that is from the matter and substance of a woman; so as thereby to bear the return of a kinsman to us, becoming consanguinous to all mankind, *which God did make of one blood*; whence *he is not ashamed to call us brethren* [and alloweth us to be of *his flesh*, and of *his bones*.]

Acts 17. 26. Heb. 2. 11. Eph. 5. 30.

We may easily conceive, that God could immediately have created a nature in kind and properties like to ours, and have assumed it; but that would not have so fitly served the design of reconciling himself to us, and redeeming us; to the effecting that in the most congruous way, not only a resemblance in nature, but a cognation and proximity in blood was needful, or at least was very convenient and suitable: for our blood being tainted, our whole stock having forfeited its dignity and estate by the rebellious disloyalty of our common ancestors, it was expedient that it should be purged and restored by the satisfactory merit, and acceptable fidelity of one, who was of our race and kindred. We being to be adopted, and received into God's Family, it was proper that business should be transacted by intervention of a common relation, according to the discourse of *S. Paul*, *God sent forth his son, born of a woman, born under the law, that he might redeem those that were under the law* (that according to the obligation undertaken by him, he performing the obedience required by the law, might redeem those, who being tyed to obey the law, had yet transgressed it) *ἵνα τῷ νόμῳ ἀπολαβόμεν*, *that (it followeth) we might receive the adoption*; that is, that we by virtue, and in consequence of that birth from a woman, and of that obedience to the law performed by our brother, might be in capacity to receive the quality of Sons to God.

Gal. 4. 4, 5.

It was likely seemly, that the Devil, who by the weakness of a woman had seduced man from his duty to God, had overthrown, triumphed over, and captivated God's creature, in just amends, for the reparation of God's honour, and our consolation, should by the strength and faithful constancy of one, proceeding

ing from a woman, he himself defeated and debased ; according to the mystical intent of that most ancient prophecy, or promise, *The seed of the woman shall break the serpent's head* ; of the woman, the man is not mentioned ; for,

2. Our Lord was born of a Virgin : so it was anciently prefigured and predicted ; *a Virgin shall conceive and bear a son ; A Virgin ; Almah*, *ἄρνησις* (so *Ila. 7. 14.* *Aquila*, with respect to the derivation of the word, did render it) that is a recluse ; *ἡ ἄρνησις* one who perhaps had seldom seen, who *never had known a man*.

This, it seemeth, was that *new thing* (that most strange and admirable thing) which God in the Prophet *Jeremy* did foreshew, that he *would create in the earth*, *Jer. 31. 22.* and which should then happen, when he would restore *Sion*, and establish a new covenant with his people ; namely, *a woman shall compass a man* ; a woman in a manner extraordinary, without the concourse of a male, should conceive, and enclose in her womb a man ; that very man, who should accomplish the great matters there predicted and promised. So it was, and so upon divers accounts it was requisite that it should be.

For how otherwise apparently, to the sense and satisfaction of all men, could he be that which (according to ancient Prophecies, and common expectation, as also according to the exigency of things, and the tenour of divine purposes) he ought to be, both the Son of God, and the Son of Man, otherwise than by coming of a Virgin ? He must be born of a woman, that he might truly be the Son of Man ; He must be born of a Virgin, that he might be clearly the Son of God ; How otherwise could there be an effectual conviction of his divine original ?

It was also decent and expedient, that the tabernacle in which God should reside and dwell, should be proper and enclosed ; that the Temple of the divinity should be holy and separate ; that the soil, whence Holiness it self would sprout forth, should be clear and pure from all sordid mixtures ; that none should presume to touch the border of that Holy * Mountain where God so specially would manifest himself ; that the lust of man should not approach that place, whence the glory of God would so illustriously shine forth.

It was also most convenient for exciting due attention and regard, for begetting faith, for procuring reverence and admiration in men, that our Redeemer should enter on the world in a manner so peculiar and miraculous : For who that heareth of such an event, can forbear to mind it, and ponder on it ? Who can doubt him to be the Son of God, whom by sufficient and certain attestation he learneth to have been conceived without any concurrence of man ? who will not readily defer high veneration to him, who appeareth in a manner so glorious, and supernatural ?

2. Moreover, our Saviour was born of *Mary* ; of that singular person determined and described in the *Gospels* ; of her, that was espoused to, and did live with *Joseph* ; with *Joseph* the Carpenter ; who was born in the town of *Bethlehem*, who lived in the city of *Nazareth* in *Galilee* ; who both according to natural and legal extraction was descended in a direct lineage from *King David*, being (as *S. Luke* saith) *of the house and family of David*, and who by consequence did lineally come from *Abraham*. She her self was also of the same stock and family ; as may be collected from circumstances intimated in the story, and certainly may be deduced from the prophecies concerning our Saviour's stock, with the assertions implying their accomplishment.

Of *Mary* therefore, by blood and progeny a Princess, extracted from the most illustrious stem on earth ; not only famous among men, but (which is infinitely more) especially dear to God ; who yet in external condition was very mean and poor, living obscurely in habitation with an Artisan, of a painful and not gainful trade.

As for her personal qualifications, they were excellently worthy ; for in disposition of mind she was very religious and devout toward God ; in the temper of her spirit very sweet and calm, very modest, meek and humble ; such the passages occurring in the *Gospels* concerning her do shew her to have been ; such particularly that most excellent *hymn* ejaculated by her (wherein we may discover a spirit ravished with the most sprightly devotion imaginable ; a devotion full of ardent love, of humble thankfulness, of hearty joy, tempered with most submissive reverence) demonstrateth her to have been.

Of a mother so related, and so qualified, our Saviour was born ; both which points were requisite.

She was so related, for the declaration of God's truth, fidelity and constancy
 * in accomplishing those ancient predictions and promises made to the Fathers ; to
 Gen. 26. 4. *Abraham, that in his seed all the families of the earth should be blessed ; to David,*
 12. 3. 18. 18. *that of the fruit of his loins God would raise up Christ to sit upon his throne ; con-*
 22. 18. *cerning whom, as by many passages in the Gospel it appeareth, God's people had*
 Gal. 3. 8. *a general expectation and persuasion, that he should be the rod out of the stem of*
 Acts 3. 25. *Jesse, and a branch growing out of his roots ; in whom the horn of David should bud ;*
 Acts 2. 15. *who should raise the tabernacle of David that was fallen, and rule over the Kingdom*
 Isa. 11. 1. 10. *of Jacob for ever. And that our Lord should be born at Bethlehem, that he should*
 Rom. 1. 3. *be called a Nazarene, were circumstances touched in the Prophets, for the veri-*
 15. 2. *fication whereof it was needful that the mother of our Lord should be thus re-*
 Pl. 132. 17. *lated.*
 Apoc. 5. 5. *lated.*
 22. 16. *lated.*
 Amos 9. 11. *lated.*
 Acts 15. 16. *lated.*
 Luk. 1. 32. — She was also to be so duely qualified as to her state and mind ; being homely in
 Jer. 33. 15. *state of life, and holy in disposition of mind ; to signifie, that God did not so*
 23. 5. — *much regard the outward pomps and appearances of this vain world, as the in-*
 Matt. 2. 5. 21. *ward frame and temper of spirit.*
 15. 23. 9. 15. *ward frame and temper of spirit.*
 27. 22. 20, 30, 42. *ward frame and temper of spirit.*

It is indeed no small disparagement to those empty glories, which men are
 wont so hugely to admire, and it may be a strong inducement to a moderate
 esteem of them, if we consider it, that God did not chuse for the mother of his
 Son, and Saviour of mankind, a visibly great Princess, or any to appearance ho-
 nourable, splendid or wealthy personage ; but her that was espoused to a mecha-
 nick artificer, her that was only rich in grace, and deck'd with interiour endow-
 ments ; adorned (after the garb which S. Peter recommendeth to women) with the
 hidden man of the heart, in the incorruptible purity of a meek and quiet spirit, which
 in the sight of God is of great price. This is the reflection which she her self did
 make upon the matter ; for this her soul did magnifie God, because he had regarded
 Luk. 1. 51. — the low estate of his hand-maiden ; — he had shewed strength with his Arm, he had
 scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts ; he had put down the mighty
 from their seat, and had exalted the humble and meek ; he had filled the hungry with
 good things, and the rich he had sent empty away : This sheweth the extreme folly
 of contemning the poor, to whom commonly God expresth so special regard,
 who are capable of so high favours, who have so glorious consorts of their state.

Such a person did the Son of God chuse to bear himself, to bear duty unto, to
 confer that special favour and eminent honour upon ; an honour, among all ex-
 teriour honours the highest, that ever was vouchsafed to any of humane kind, or
 indeed to any mere creature.

I say of exteriour honours, for spiritual advantages, our Lord himself doth
 teach us in our esteem to prefer above this great privilege ; they being *toto genere*,
 superiour, and placing us in a nobler relation to him than this ; *Whosoever*, saith
 Matt. 12. 5. *he, shall do the will of my Father that is in heaven, the same is my brother and sister*
and mother ; the same in a more excellent manner and sublime degree is allyed, is
endeared to me, than he can be upon the score of any carnal kindred : The con-
formity to him in our mind and affections doth render us nearer to him than any
cognition of blood ; the having him formed in our hearts is more considerable,
than the bearing of him in the womb.

Indeed, the mother of our Lord her self, although as such she was *κατασκευασμένη*,
 Luke 1. 28. *especially favoured and graced, and blessed among women ; although upon that ac-*
 48. 49. *count all nations must esteem and call her blessed ; although worthily she did in that*
respect acknowledge, that God had done μεγάλα, magnificent and mighty things for
her ; yet really, in just esteem, to have Christ born in her soul, to have partici-
ipated of his divine grace and presence in her heart, the Holy Ghost's having pro-
duced a spiritual birth of holy dispositions in her, was a nobler honour, and a
truer happiness than that ; neither would it, as S. Chrysostome saith, have been any-
wise profitable to her, if she had not been vertuous, to bear Christ in her womb, or to
bring forth that admirable birth ; this our Saviour plainly declared, when as a good
woman, transported by the ravishing excellency of his discourse, did cry out,
 * *Blessed is the womb that bare thee, he therefore took occasion to say, Yea rather,*
 * *blessed are they that hear the word of God and keep it.*

We might also here farther observe, that our Saviour upon other good accounts,
 Matt. 12. 50. *willingly did chuse so mean a parentage ; namely,*
 * Luk. 11. 27. *That he thence might have readier opportunity to undergo and taste the great-*

est inconvenience and hardships incident to our nature, thereby more fully meriting and suffering for us.

That he might have occasion to exemplify the most difficult virtues and duties (humility, meekness, patience, contentedness) shewing us how we should virtuously comport with the lowest state; how we should cheerfully sustain wants, labours, pains and disgraces; how we should contentedly be destitute of all the glories, riches and pleasures of this world;

That also the divine power and glory might appear more conspicuously through his worldly state of impotency and baseness.

That he might insinuate the nature of his Kingdom not to consist in secular pomp and puissance, but in spiritual power over the hearts of men.

That he might discover wherein our happiness doth consist; how little any thing, which is high in vulgar esteem of men, is an ingredient thereof: And what is the true grandeur of a man; not his outward garb and retinue, but his inward virtue and goodness.

Finally, this relation of the Blessed Virgin to our Lord, as it should beget a precious esteem and honourable memory of her (for let that mouth be cursed which will not call her blessed, let the name of him be branded with everlasting reproach of folly, who will not prefer her in dignity before any Queen or Empress) so it should not serve to breed in us fond opinions, or to ground superstitious practices in regard to her, as it hath happened to do among divers sorts of *Christians*; especially among the adherents to *Rome*. For,

They (out of a wanton mind, but in effect profanely and sacrilegiously) have attributed to her divers swelling and vain names, divers scandalously unfavoury, some hideously blasphemous titles and elogies, as alluding to, so intrenching upon the incommunicable prerogatives of God Almighty, and of our Blessed Saviour; such as *the Queen of Heaven, the Health of the world, the Mother of mercies, the Spouse of God, our Lady*, (as if beside our *unus Dominus*, there were *una Domina* in the Church, forgotten by *S. Paul*) with the like.

Ephes. 4. 5.
1 Cor. 8. 6.

They ascribe to her the most sublime attributes of God, together with his most peculiar actions of providence and protection over us, yea of redemption it self.

They yield acts of religious veneration (prayer and praise) to her, and those in a very high manner and strein; professing not only *to serve her* religiously (which the Holy Scripture chargeth us to do in regard to God and him only) but *to adore her*, to do more than serve her, or to serve her with exceeding devotion.

Who commonly do at the end of their works join, *Praise be to God, and to the Blessed Virgin*; as if she were to share with God in the glory and gratitude due for blessing or success upon our performances.

Laus Deo &
B. Virgini.

All this they do without any plain reason, any plausible authority, any ancient example, yea manifestly enough against the best reason, the commands of God, the doctrine and practice of the primitive Church, all which do conspire in appropriating religious adoration to God alone: Neither the Holy Scripture, nor the first Fathers excepting the Blessed Virgin from the general rule; or taking notice of her as an object of our worship, but nipping the first essays of such a superstition in the *Collyridians*.

Such groundless and foolish conceits, such dangerous and impious practices we should carefully beware; the which, as they much derogate from God's honour, and prejudice his service, and thwart his commands, so they indeed do rather greatly discredit, injure and abuse the Blessed Virgin, (making her name accessory to such enormous scandals) than they do bring any honour, or do any right to her.

And, I doubt not but, *εὐσεβείας*, if she from her seat of bliss doth behold these perverse services, or absurd flatteries of her, she with holy regret and disdain, doth distaste, loath, disdain and reject them; with a *Non nobis Domine*, *Psalm 115. Not unto us, O Lord*; and with the *Angel* in the *Apocalypse*, *Ὁρα μὴ, See thou do it not.*

Apoc. 19. 10.
22. 9.
Acts 10. 26.
14. 14.

Whose greater honour it was in truth, to be a meek and humble servant, than to be the mother of her Lord and Saviour; It is the chief and truest honour we can do her, to esteem her great modesty and humility, to imitate her piety and grace, after her pattern conscientiously to reverence and obey her Son: Unto whom therefore let us with hearty thankfulness render all Glory and Praise.

Amen.

Suffered under Pontius Pilate.

S E R M O N XXV

1 COR. I. 23.

*But we preach Christ * crucified.*

* Who was crucified.
(τὸν ἐσταυρωμένον.)
Λόγος τοῦ σταυροῦ
1 Cor. I. 18.



THE Doctrine of the Gospel is called *the word of the Cross*; that is, a report concerning our Lord's crucifixion, together with a declaration of the ends, effects and uses of it; this being a special and main point therein, whereto all the rest are closely allyed, and whereon the whole method of our salvation dependeth; a point, which (as *S. Paul* in this, and in several other places doth acquaint us) of all others did find the hardest enter-

tainment among all sorts of people, to whom it was addressed; few auditors being disposed to swallow it, or able to digest it. The *Jews* were much offended, that one who suffered by their hands in so vile and wretched a manner, should be propounded to them as their *Messiah* and *King*; the same, who according to their opinions and hopes (grounded on their ancient Prophecies plausibly interpreted, and on their constant traditions) was destined to restore them from their afflicted condition, and to rear them into a high state of prosperity. The *Pagans* took it for an extravagantly foolish conceit, that a person of so mean a quality, and so miserable a fortune, should be such as was told them, *the Son of God*; and *Lord of all things*, the author of happiness, and the object of highest adoration to all men; very absurd and abominable this Proposition did generally seem to the carnal and worldly prejudices of men, who little could understand, and less would consider the sublime design thereof; but to those, who (being endued with a meek heart, and enlightened by divine grace) did rightly apprehend and duly weigh it, it did afford great satisfaction and comfort; it had on them a most effectual and beneficial influence; proving indeed unto them *the power of God to salvation*; as raising in them strong hopes of salvation, and engaging them in a practice conducive thereto. Upon this point therefore our Lord's Ambassadors, the *Holy Apostles*, in their preaching chiefly did insist, declaring the great ends, and excellent fruits of our *Blessed Saviour's* crucifixion; according to that of *S. Paul*, *I determine to know nothing among you save Christ, and him crucified.*

It is therefore questionless a most profitable, and ever (especially now, when our Lord's passion is by the Church solemnly commemorated) very seasonable subject of our meditation; apt to excite good thoughts, good affections, and good resolutions in us; and as such I mean now to recommend and apply it; endeavouring to assist your meditation by suggesting some remarkable particulars concerning it; and in my discourse I shall not so much generally consider the death and passion of our Lord, as the particular manner and kind thereof, by crucifixion; the which we may contemplate, as qualified with divers notable adjuncts; namely, 1. As a suffering in appearance criminal. 2. As most bitter and painful. 3. As most ignominious and shameful. 4. As agreeable and advantageous to the intents of his passion. 5. As compleatory of ancient presignifications and predictions. 6. As apt to excite devotion in us, and to enforce on us the practice of our duty.

1. Let us consider it as a suffering in appearance criminal; or a seeming execution of justice upon our Lord, as a malefactor. *He was*, as the Prophet foretold, *numbred among the transgressors*; and God (saith *S. Paul*) *made him sin for us, who knew no sin*; that is, God ordered him to be dealt with as an exceedingly sinful, or

Celsus Orig.
lib. 2. p. 83,
&c. lib. 1. p.
368.
Porphyrius.
Aug. de Civ.
D. 10. 28.
Lucian.
Jul. apud Cy-
rill. 6. p. 194.
Tryphon.
apud Just.
(p. 317.)

1 Cor. I. 18.
Rom. I. 16.

1 Cor. 2. 2.

Tryphon the
Jew in Justin
Martyr, doth
confess, That
Christ, accord-
ing to the
Prophecies of
Holy Scrip-
ture, was to
suffer, but it
did offend
him that he
should suffer
in this kind.
Just. M. p. 317.

Isa. 53. 12.
2 Cor. 5. 21.

or criminal person, who in himself was perfectly innocent, and void of the least tendency to any fault. So in effect it was, that he was impeached of the highest crimes, not only as a violator of the divine law, in breaking the Sabbath, in John 5. 18. keeping bad company, and holding an over-free conversation; but as an impostor, deluding and seducing the people; as a blasphemer, assuming to himself the properties and prerogatives of God, as a seditious and rebellious person, *perverting the nation*, forbidding the payments of tribute to *Cæsar*, usurping Royal authority, and pretending to be *Christ a King*; in general, as a *malefactor*, or one guilty of notable crimes; so his prosecutors (in the Gospel) did affirm, *If (said they to Pilate) he were not a malefactor, we should not have delivered him up unto thee*: As such he was represented and arraigned; and that altho' by a sentence wrested from the Judge against his conscience, by the malicious importunity of his accusers, he was condemned, and in pretence suffered as such, is clear and admitted by all. 10. 30. 7. 12. Luke 32. 2. Matt. 27. 63. John 18. 30.

Now whereas any death, or passion of our Lord (as being in it self infinitely valuable, and most precious in the sight of God) might have been sufficient toward the accomplishing the general designs of his passion, the expiation of our guilt, the appeasement of God's wrath, the satisfaction of divine justice; it might be inquired, why God should so expose him, and why he should chuse to suffer under this odious and ugly character; to satisfy this demand, and that we may the more admire the wisdom and goodness of God in this great dispensation, divers reasons may be assigned, which are intimated in Holy Scripture, or bear a conformity to its doctrine, why it was so ordered. For,

I. As our Saviour freely did undertake a life of greatest meanness and hardship, so upon the like accounts he might be pleased to undergo a death of all most bitter and uncomfortable: There is nothing to man's nature (especially to honest and ingenuous nature, wherein natural modesty is not extinct) more abominable than such a death: God for good purposes hath planted in our constitution a lively sense of disgrace; and of all disgraces that which proceedeth from an imputation of heinous crimes is most disgustful and pungent; and being conscious of our innocence, doth increase the smart; and to reflect upon our selves dying under it, or leaving the world with an indelible stain upon our name and memory, is yet more grievous; Even to languish by degrees, enduring the torments of a long, however sharp disease, would, to any ingenuous person, be far more eligible, than in this manner (of being reputed and treated as a villain) to find a quick and easie dispatch; Some touch of which resentment we may conceive breaking forth in our Lord, and somewhat of man's nature discovering it self in that question; *Be ye come out as against a thief, with swords and staves?* He did it seems, as a man, loath to be prosecuted as a thief; yet he willingly chose it; as he purposely did embrace other the worst of distastful things, belonging to our nature, and incident to that lowly condition, into which he did put himself; (not only being made Phil. 2. 7. in the likeness of man, but taking the form of a servant) to endure want, and to fare hardly; to be slighted, envied, hated, scorned and reproached through the whole course of his life. Had he dyed in any other way, he had not been so complete a sufferer, nor had tasted the worst of what men can and do endure; there had been a comfort in seeming innocent, which had impaired the perfection of his undertaking. Often was he in danger of death, both from the close machinations, and from the open violences of those who maligned him; but he industriously declineth a death so easie, and so honourable, if I may so speak; it not being so disgraceful to fall by private malice, or by sudden rage, as by the solemn and deliberate proceeding of persons in publick authority, and great credit. John 5. 18. 8. 37, 40, 59. 7. 1, 19, 25. 10. 32, 38.

This kind of death he did foresee, and plainly with satisfaction did aim at; He (as we have it related in the Gospel) did shew his disciples, that it was incumbent on him (by Gods appointment, and his own choice) *that he ought to suffer many things; to be reproached by the Chief Priests, Elders and Scribes; to be vilified by them; to be condemned, and delivered up to the Gentiles, to be mocked and scourged, and crucified; as a most flagitious slave.* Matt. 16. 21. Luke 9. 22. Mark 9. 12. Ἀποδομιὰ δούλου ἐχθροῦ ὡς δούλου.

Thus would our Saviour, in conformity to all the rest of his voluntary afflictions, and for a consummation of them, not only suffer in his body, by sore bruises and wounds, in his soul by the bitterest sorrows and agonies; but in his name also and reputation by the foulest scandals; undergoing as well all the infamy,

famy, as the infirmity which did belong unto us, or could befall us; thus meaning by all means to express his charity, and exercise his compassion toward us; thus advancing his merit, and yielding the utmost satisfaction to justice in our behalf. Again,

Isa. 53. 6.

2. Death passing on him as a malefactor by publick judgment, did best sute to the nature of his undertaking, was most congruous to his design in suffering, did most aptly represent what he was doing, and imploy the reason of his performance. We all were guilty in a most high degree; we deserved an exemplary condemnation; the sharpest pain, together with the greatest shame, was due to us for our unworthy offending our most great, and our most good Lord and Maker; He did undertake in our stead to bear all this, and fully to satisfy for us; He therefore underwent the like judgment and punishment, being reputed, being termed, being treated as we should have been, in quality of a notorious malefactor, as we in truth are. What we really had acted in dishonouring and usurping upon God, in disordering and troubling the World, in deceiving and perverting others (by our negligent mistakes, and our presumptuous miscarriages; by our evil practices and contagious examples) that was imputed to him, and avenged on him; *All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord hath laid upon him the iniquities of us all*; he therefore did not only sustain an equivalent punishment, but in a sort did bear an equal blame with us before God and man. Farther,

Deut. 1.
2 Chr. 19. 6.

3. Seeing it was determined that our Lord should die for us, and that not in a natural but violent manner, so as perfectly to satisfy God's justice, to vindicate his honour, and to evidence his indignation against our sins; it was most fit, that he should perform it in that way, wherein God's right is most nearly concerned, and his providence most discernable; wherein it should be most apparent, that God did exact and inflict punishment on him, that he did yield unto it, and submissively undergo it. *All judgment* (as *Moses* said in his charge) *is God's*; or is administered in his name, by authority derived from him; all Magistrates being his Officers and instruments, by whom he governeth and ordereth the world, his Kingdom; whence that which is done in way of formal judgment by persons in authority, God himself may be supposed in a more special and immediate manner to execute it, as being done by his commission, in his stead, on his behalf; with his peculiar superintendence and guidance; It was therefore in our Saviour a signal act of submission to God's authority and justice, becoming the person which he sustained of our proxy and redeemer, to undergo such a judgment, and such a punishment; whereby he received a doom as it were from God's own mouth, uttered by his Ministers; and bare the stroke of justice from God's hand, represented by his instruments; wherefore very seasonably and pertinently did he reply to *Pilate*, avowing his authority under God in those words, *Thou hast no power over me* (or against me) *except it were given thee from above*; implying, it was in regard to that originally supreme authority of God his Father, and to his particular appointment upon that occasion, that our Saviour did then freely subject himself to those inferior and subordinate powers, as to the proper ministers of divine justice; Had he suffer'd in any other way, by any private malice or passion of men, God's special providence in that case had been less visible, and *Christ's* obedience not so remarkable; And if he must die by publick hands, it must be as a criminal, under a pretence of guilt and demerit; there must be a formal process, how full soever of mockery and outrage; there must be testimonies produced, however false and groundless; there must be a sentence pronounced, although most partial and corrupt; for no man is persecuted by authority without some colour of desert; otherwise it would cease to be publick authority, and become private violence; the prosecutor then would put off the face of a Magistrate, and appear as a murderer, or a thief.

Kar' ἐμὴ.
John 19. 11.

4. In fine, our Saviour perhaps in no other way, with such advantage, could have displayed all kinds of virtue and goodness, to the honour of God, and the furtherance of our benefit, as in this: The Judgment-hall, with all the passages leading him thither, and from thence to execution, attended on by guards of soldiers, among the crouds and clamours of the people, were as so many theatres, on which he had opportune convenience visibly, in the eye of the world, to act divers parts of sublimest virtue; to express his insuperable constancy in at-
telling

testing truth and maintaining a good conscience, his meekness in calmly bearing the greatest wrongs, his patience in contentedly enduring the saddest adversities; his entire resignation to the will and providence of God; his peaceable submission to the law and power of man; his admirable charity in pitying, in excusing, in obliging those by his good wishes and earnest prayers for their pardon, who in a manner so injurious, so despiteful, so cruel, did persecute him; yea in willingly suffering all this for their salvation: all these excellent virtues and graces, by the matter being thus ordered, were in a degree most eminent, and in a manner very conspicuous, demonstrated to the praise of God's name, and the advancement of his truth; for the settlement of our faith and hope; for an instruction and encouragement of good practice to us. Upon such considerations it might be expedient, that he should suffer in this kind as a criminal.

Was Crucified.

S E R M O N XXVI.

1 COR. I. 23.

But we preach Christ crucified.



IT is added in the *Creed*, under *Pontius Pilate*; ἐν Ποντίῳ Πιλάτῳ; in which words the *preposition* ἐν may either denote the circumstance of time, when our Saviour's passion did happen in the time of *Pontius Pilate* his government, or presidency over *Judea*; so the word ἐν is very frequently used; or it may also farther imply a respect to that person, as an instrument of our Saviour's passion; so that it might also be rendred, by, or under *Pontius Pilate*, as President and Judge; thus is the word sometimes used (as for instance, where in the *Gospel* it is said, ἐὰν ἀκούσῃ τὸ ἐν τῷ ἡγεμῶνι, *if this be heard by the Governour*, or *if it come to the Governour's ear*, as it is rendred in our Translation.) Neither of these senses were, I suppose, distinctly, but both rather conjunctly intended here; in relation to the *Evangelical History*; the which (as to the main obvious passages) we are here supposed to know, and do profess to believe; neither do I think any thing more of mystery designed here beyond the full and clear determination of our Saviour's Person; or the declaration of whom we do believe in by circumstances most apt and suitable to that purpose; the *time when*, the *person under whom*, and consequently the *place where*, and *manner how* he suffered. However all these circumstances are in themselves considerable, and afford some matter of edification to our faith and practice: Let us therefore touch upon them.

Matt. 28. 14.

Dan. 9. 26.

1. The *time*, in it self most fit, and most agreeable to divine predictions, doth illustrate the wisdom of God in his providence, doth confirm his veracity, his constancy and his fidelity: For when the fulness of time was come; when the Scepter of Legislation and Sovereign authority was just departed from *Judah*; while the *Jewish Temple* did stand but was shortly to be destroyed; before the *Jews* were utterly unsettled, and dispersed; when the *LXX. hebdomades* (of years) were near expiring, the time when the *Messias should be cut off*; when *Judaism* was by numerous accession of Profelytes diffused over the world; the Sacred Writings being translated, and legible every where; when the world was in the most general peace, and deepest calm; consequently mens attention being then more ready, and their minds more capable of instruction and persuation concerning di-

vine

vine truths; when the most considerable part of the world was united under one Empire (or under two, that of the *Romans*, and that of the *Parthians*) and thence more fit to be incorporated into a spiritual Common-wealth (to communicate in offices of piety, to impart and receive instruction) when mankind by learning and policy was generally better civilized than ever, more inquisitive after knowledge, and more receptive of truth; when in short all things were duly prepared, and fitted for the great effects designed by God to proceed from our Saviour's passion, and other performances, then did he suffer, and do what God had in his wisdom and goodness predetermined, presignified and predicted. I might add, that the time was fit to be set down, as a character apt to confirm the truth of the history; for direction to a fair inquiry and trial concerning it; to exclude all confusion and uncertainty about it.

2. As for the *Person* under whom our Lord suffered; if we consider him as a *Roman-stranger* (or *Gentile*) or as a *Governor* and *Judge*; or with regard to his personal qualities; or according to his deportment in this affair; something in all these respects may present it self observable by us.

He was an alien from the Common-wealth of *Israel*; so *Jews* and *Gentiles* conspired in violence and injury against their common Saviour; that so in type and mystery it might be signified how the sins of all men did jointly bring him to his death; *that every mouth might be stopped, and all the world might become guilty before God.* Neither was it for nothing decreed by God, that the *Jews* should (as our Saviour foretold) *deliver him up* (τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις) to the *Gentiles*, to mock, and scourge, and crucifie him. The *Jews* out of envy and malice delivered him up, accused and prosecuted him, instigated and importuned against him; The *Gentiles* out of ignorance, profaneness and unjust partiality, condemned and executed him; whereby the ingratitude, iniquity and impiety of all mankind did in some sort appear, and was aptly represented; and consequently his immense goodness is demonstrated, who for so impious, unjust and flagitious a generation, for so malicious enemies, for so cruel persecutors of himself did willingly suffer: them, who so combined in mischief against him, he then designed to conjoin in reconciliation to God, and in mutual peace and charity toward one another; *reconciling both unto God in one body by the Cross, having slain the enmity thereby.*

A *stranger* also was proper for the management of this affair as apt to be a more fair and indifferent Judge; doing what was designed and fit to be done in our Saviour's trial, for vindication of his personal innocence, and declaration of the iniquity practised against him.

Again, if we consider *Pilate* as a *Governor* and *Judge*; (for so he was, *Cesar's Procurator*, and *President of Judæa*, ἐπίτροπος, and ἡγεμὼν he is called) we therein may discern the wisdom and special providence of God; punishing our Saviour for us by his own officer in a course of Justice; the loyal obedience of our Saviour submitting both to God and to man, although in a case of a plain outrage and highest injustice against himself; the heinousness of that wicked proceeding, wherein that sacred power committed by God to men, and the venerable name of justice were so abused; for if ever, then one might have said with the *Preacher*, *I saw the place of judgment, that wickedness, was there; and the place of righteousness, that iniquity was there.*

As for *Pilate's* personal qualities; he is by the *Historians* writing near those times reported to have been a man of a harsh and rough temper, willful and haughty in spirit, violent, rapacious and cruel in his proceedings, and was therefore a proper instrument of providence for execution of such a business; so holy and gracious in God's purpose, so villanous and barbarous according to man's intention; Such a person deserved to bear the guilt of a fact so execrably base; was worthy to be employed therein, and ready enough to undergo it: It had not in it self been so plausible that such an act should, nor so credible that it could proceed from any person otherwise of good disposition or right intention; but for him it was proper, of him it could not be improbable; who by his former violences (such as upon the complaints of this people did soon after, as *Josephus* telleth, remove him from his charge) had so incensed the *Jews*, that he would not stick to gratifie them in a manner wherein they so earnestly concerned themselves; and which in semblance (sitting aside considerations of justice and honesty, so little material in such a person's regard) so little touched his own interest; in yielding up so poor, so

so as to outward shew inconsiderable a person, as a boon or sacrifice to their importunate rage: *Pilate* (saith S. Mark) *willing to content the people, released Barrabas unto them, and delivered Jesus, when he had scourged him, to be crucified.* Mark 15. 15.
Τὸ ἰκεῖν
παισμον τῶν
Ἰουδαίων.

Such an one he was; and yet it is observable, that in comparison to the furious *Jews*, he behaved himself with some moderation and ingenuity: He was so fair in examination of the case, as notwithstanding their eager and clamorous prosecution, to discern the right, and to declare our *Saviour* guiltless: He was so far constant and true to his conscience, as to expostulate with the *Jews*, once, twice, and a third time to challenge them, *Why, what evil hath he done?* as often did he discover his inclination and readiness (yea his will and intention, his earnest desire—) to free the innocent person: Yet had he not the heart or the honesty thoroughly to resist their importunities; they were more obstinate in their wicked designs, than he resolute in his good purposes: So partly, out of fear to offend them, partly out of favour to oblige them (those two usual corrupters of right judgment) he yielded to them, unworthily suffering himself to be overborn by their wicked solicitations, so sacrificing acknowledged innocence to his own private interest, and their implacable malice. Thus did the heathen Judge behave himself, serving divine providence, not only in the publick and formal condemnation of our Saviour to the punishment due unto us, but in the solemn and serious absolution of him from all blame deserved by himself: In shew he condemned our Saviour, in truth he condemned himself, the corrupt Judge; and the *Jews*, the malicious accusers: though he took away his life, yet he cleared his reputation; affording a testimony most valid and convincing of his innocence; such as was requisite to convince all *Jewish* slanders and aspersions; and sufficient to confirm our faith. John 19. 6.
Luke 23. 14.
Eccl.
John 19. 12.
Luk 23. 20.
Acts 3. 13.
Κελευσθησεν
ἀπολύναι.

3. Farthermore, the name of *Pontius Pilate* intimateth the place of our Saviour's passion; he being well known to have been Governour of *Judea*, and to have his Tribunal of Justice at the mother City thereof, *Jerusalem*: at *Jerusalem*, that bloody City, as the Prophet calls it; whose character it was to be the killer of the Prophets, and the stoner of them who were sent unto her; out of which it was (in a sort) impossible, that a Prophet should perish; yet the place of all the world most favoured, and graced by God by special blessings and privileges; at *Jerusalem*, his own peculiar seat; the City of God, the City of the great King it is stiled; the which he out of all the Tribes of Israel, out of all the people of the earth had chosen to put his name (to place his especial presence) there; the holy and beloved City; there at his own doors as it were, before his own sacred Palace, where most especial respect and veneration were due to him, was the King of heaven adjudged and executed; by procurement of his own servants, peculiarly related to him, the Chief Priests, and Elders of his chosen people, persons wholly devoted to his service, and highly dignified by him; whose office and especial duty it was to maintain truth and encourage righteousness, to procure, by their instruction and practice, honour to God and obedience to his commandments; which circumstance considered as it highly advances the goodness of him, who willingly suffered there, and by such persons; so it much aggravateth man's ingratitude and iniquity. Ezek. 22. 2.
24. 6.
Luke 13. 33.
34.
Psal. 48. 2.
87. 3.
Deut. 12. 5.
Neh. 9. 1.
Ezra 6. 12.
1 Kings 11. 32.
Mat. 4. 5.
27. 53.
Apoc. 20. 9.
Eccl.

I shall now proceed to handle the rest of the Particulars which I proposed in the beginning of the last Discourse.

II. We may consider that his suffering was most bitter and painful: We may easily imagine, what acerbity of pain must be endured by our Lord in his tender limbs being stretched forth, racked and tendered, and continuing a good time in such a posture; by the piercing his hands and his feet, parts exquisitely sensible, with sharp nails, (so that as it is said of *Joseph*, the iron entered into his soul) by abiding exposed to the injuries of Sun scorching, wind beating upon, whether searching his grievous wounds and sores: Such a pain it was, and that no ~~stupid~~ no transient pain, but a pain very acute, and withall lingering: for we see that he, and those who suffered with him, had both presence of mind, and time to discourse; even six long hours did he continue under such torture, sustaining in each minute of them beyond the pangs of an ordinary death. But as the case was so hard and sad, so the reason thereof was great, and the fruit answerably excellent: Our Saviour did embrace such a passion, that in being thus ready to endure the most grievous smarts for us, he might demonstrate the vehemence of Psal. 105. 18.
O. T.
Mark 15. 25.
34.

- his love ; that he might signifie the heinousness of our sins, which deserved that from such a person, so heavy punishment should be exacted ; that he might appear to yield a valuable compensation for those everlasting tortures which we should have endured ; that he might thoroughly exemplify the hardest duties of obedience and patience. Farther,

*Quod etiam
homine libero
quamvis no-
cente videatur
indignum.
Lact. 4. (p.
436.)*

Deut. 21. 23.
Gal. 3. 16.
Τὸ γὰρ μόνον
τὸ πλάττει τὸ
εἶδος τοῦ
ἀέθρ' ἔκειτο.
Chrys. Tom.
6. Or. 61.

III. We may consider this sort of punishment as most sharp and afflictive, so most vile and shameful ; being proper to the basest condition of the worst men, and *unworthy* (as *Lactantius* saith) of a freeman, however innocent, or guilty. It was *servile supplicium*, a punishment never by the Romans, under whose Law our Lord suffered, legally inflicted upon freemen, but only upon slaves, that is upon people scarce regarded as men, having in a sort forfeited or lost themselves ; and among the Jews likewise, that execution, which most approached thereto, and in part agreed with it (for they had no so inhumane punishment appointed by their Law) hanging up the dead bodies of some who had been executed, was deemed most infamous and execrable ; for *curfed*, said the Law, *is every one that hangeth upon a tree* ; *curfed*, that is devoted to reproach and malediction ; *accursed of God*, it is in the *Hebrew* ; that is, seeming to be deserted by God, or to be exposed to affliction by his special order.

Indeed, according to course of things, to be raised on high, and for continuance of time, to be objected to the view of all that pass by, in that calamitous posture, doth breed ill suspicion, doth provoke censure, doth invite contempt, scorn and obloquy ; doth naturally draw forth language of derision, despiht and detestation, especially from the inconsiderate, rude and hard-hearted vulgar ; which commonly doth think, speak, deal with men according to event and appearance (— *sequitur fortunam semper & odit Damnatos*) whence *στανεῖσθαι*, to be made a gazing stock, or object of reproach to the multitude, is accounted by the Apostle as an aggravation of the hardships endured by the primitive Christians : And thus in the highest degree did it happen to our Lord ; for we read that the people did in that condition, mock, jeer and revile him ; *ἔξεμυκτήριζον, ἐνέπαιζον, ἔλασφίζον*, they drew up their noses, they shot out their lips, they shook their heads at him ; they let out their wicked and wanton tongues against him ; verifying that prediction in the Psalm, *I am a reproach of men, and despised of the people ; all they that see me laugh me to scorn ; they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, he trusted in the Lord, that he would deliver him, let him deliver him, seeing he delighted in him* : In this case the same persons, who formerly had admired his glorious works, who had been ravished with his excellent discourses, who had followed and favoured him so earnestly ; who had blessed and magnified him (for *he*, saith S. Luke, *did teach in their Synagogues, δὲ αὐλοῦντο καὶ πάντων, being glorified by all*) even those very men did then behold him with pitiless scorn and despiht ; *εἰσῆκεν ὁ λαὸς θεωρῶν*, the people, saith S. Luke, *stood gazing upon him*, in correspondence to that in the Prophet, *they look and stare upon me* ; they looked in a scornful manner, venting contemptuous and spiteful reproaches, as we see reported in the Evangelical Histories.

Thus did our Saviour endure the cross, despising the shame ; despising the shame, that is, not simply disregarding, or disesteeming it, as no evil, with a Stoical haughtiness, or Cynical immodesty ; but not eschewing it, or not valuing it as so great an evil, that for declining it he would neglect the prosecution of his great and glorious designs. There is in man's nature an averfation and abhorrency from disgraceful abuse, no less strong than are the like antipathies to pain ; whence cruel mockings and scourgings we find coupled together, as ingredients of the sore persecutions sustained by God's faithful Martyrs ; and generally men will more readily embrace, and more contentedly support the latter than the former ; pain not so grievously affecting the lower sense, as being insolently despised, doth grate on the fancy and wound the mind ; for the wounds of infamy do as the Wise Man telleth us, *go down into the innermost parts of the belly*, piercing the very hearts of men, and touching the soul to the quick. We need not therefore doubt but that our Saviour (as a man, endued with humane passions and infirmities) was sensible of this natural evil ; and that such indignity did add somewhat of bitter and loathsomeness to his cup of affliction ; especially considering that his great charity disposed him to grieve, observing men to act so very indecently, so unworthily, and so unjustly toward him ; yet in consideration of the glory that would

Prov. 18. 8.
12. 18.

would thence accrue to God, of the benefit that would redound to us, of the joy that was set before him, when he should see of the travail of his soul, and be satisfied, he did most willingly undertake and gladly undergo it : He became, as the Apostle saith, a curse for us, or was exposed to malediction and reviling ; he endured the contradiction (or obloquy) of sinful men, he was despised, rejected and disesteemed of men ; he in the common apprehensions of men did seem deserted by God, according to that of the Prophet, *We did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted* ; he did himself in a manner seem to concur in that opinion, as by that woful outcry, *Lama sabachthani*, doth appear : So did he become a curse for us, that, as the Apostle subjoineth, *we might be redeemed from the curse of the Law*, that is, that we might be saved from that exemplary punishment due to our transgressions of the Law ; with the displeasure of God appearing therein, and the disgrace before men attending it : He chose thus to *make himself of no reputation* (as the Apostle speaketh) being contented to be dealt with as a wretched slave and wicked miscreant, that we might be exempted not only from the torment, but also from the ignominy we had deserved ; that we together with our life, and safety, and liberty, might recover even that honour which we had forfeited.

But lest any one should be tempted not sufficiently to value these sufferings of our Lord, as things not so rare, but that other men have tasted the like ; or should be ready to compare them with the sufferings of other vertuous men, as *Celsus* did with those of *Anaxarcus* and *Epictetus* ; I shall by the bye interpose somewhat observable concerning them. We may then consider, that not only the infinite excellency of his person, and the perfect innocency of his life, did enhance the price of his sufferings, but some endowments peculiar to him, and some circumstances, did increase their force : He was not only, according to the frame and temper of humane nature, sensibly affected with the pain and shame, and all the rest of evils apparently waiting on his passion ; as God (when he did insert sense and passion in our nature, ordering objects to affect them) did intend that we should be, and as other men in like outward circumstances would have been, but in many respects beyond that ordinary rate : No man, we may suppose, could have felt such grief from them as he did, no man did ever feel any thing comparable to what he did endure ; it might be truly applyed to him, *Behold and see if there be any sorrow like to my sorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger*, as that extraordinary sweating great lumps of blood may argue ; as the terms expressing his affliction do intimate ; for in regard to present evils his soul is said to have been exceedingly sorrowful unto death ; he is said ἀδυνασέειν, to be in great anguish and anxiety ; and to be in an agony, or pang : In respect to mischiefs which he foresaw coming on, he is said ταράσσειν τὸ πνεῦμα, to be disordered, or disturbed in spirit, and ἐκθαμβεῖσθαι, to be amazed, or dismayed at them ; to such excessive height of passion did the sense of incumbent evils, and the prospect of impendent disasters, the apprehension of his own case, and reflection upon our state raise him : And no wonder, that such a burthen, the weight of all the sins (the numberless heinous sins and abominations) which he did appropriate to himself, that ever have been, or shall be committed by mankind, lying upon his shoulders, he should feel it heavy, he should seem to crouch and groan under it ; Innumerable evils (said he in the myrical Psalm) have compassed me about, mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up ; they are more than the hairs of my head, therefore my heart faileth me. God's indignation so dreadfully flaming out against sin might well astonish and terrifie him ; to stand before the mouth of hell belching out fire and brimstone upon him, to lie down in the hottest furnace of divine vengeance, to undertake with his heart-blood to quench all the wrath of heaven, and all the flames of hell (as he did in regard to those who will not rekindle them to themselves) might well in the heart of a man beget unconceivable and unexpressible pressures of anguish ; when such a Father (so infinitely good and kind to him, and whom he so dearly loved) did hide his face from him, did angrily frown on him, How could he otherwise than be sorely troubled ? It is not strange, that so hearty a love, so tender a pity contemplating our sinfulness, and sustaining our wretchedness, should be deeply affected thereby ; any one of those persons, who fondly do pretend to, or vainly glory in a stupid Apathy, or in a stubborn contempt

tempt of the evils incident to our nature and state, would in such a case have been utterly dejected ; the most resolved Philosopher would have been dashed into confusion at the sight, would have been crushed to despair under the sense of those calamities which assaulted our Lord. With the greatness of the causes, the goodness of his constitution might also conspire to augment his suffering ; for surely as his complexion was most pure and delicate, his spirit most vivid and apprehensive, his affections most pliant and tractable ; so accordingly should the impressions upon him be most sensible ; and consequently the pains which he felt both in soul and body most sharp and afflictive. That we in like cases are not alike affected, that we do not tremble at the apprehensions of God's displeasure, that we are not affrighted with the sense of our sins, that we do not with sad horror resent our own danger, or our misery ; doth arise from that we have very glimmering and faint conceptions of those things, or that they do not in so clear and lively a manner strike our mind and fancy ; (not appearing in their true nature and proper shape, so heinous and so hideous, as they really in themselves, and in their consequences are) or because that we have but weak persuasions about them ; or because we do but slightly consider them ; or from that our hearts are hard and callous, our affections cold and dull, so that nothing of this nature (nothing beside gross material affairs) can easily move or melt them ; or for that we have in us small love to God, and little regard to our own true welfare ; for that briefly in respect to spiritual matters, we are neither so wise, so serious, so sober ; not so good and ingenuous in any reasonable measure, as we ought to be : But our Saviour in all these respects was otherwise disposed ; he most evidently discerned the wrath of God, the grievousness of sin, the wretchedness of man most truly, most fully, most strongly represented to his imagination and spirit ; he most firmly believed, yea most certainly knew all that God's law had declared about them ; he thoroughly did consider and weigh them ; his heart was most soft, and sensible, his affections were most quick, and easily excited by their due objects ; He was full of dutiful love to God his Father, and most ardently desirous of our good, bearing a more than fraternal good-will toward us ; whence 'tis not marvellous, that as a man, as a transcendently good man, he was so vehemently affected by those occurrences ; that his imagination was so troubled, and his affections so mightily stirred by them ; so that he thence truly did suffer in a manner, and to a degree unconceivable ; according to that ejaculation in the Greek Liturgies, *διὰ τῆς ἀγνώστου σου παθημάτων ἐλέησον ἡμᾶς, χεῖρε, By thy unknown sufferings, O Christ, have mercy on us.* But farther,

IV. We may consider, that this way of suffering had in it some particular advantages conducing to the accomplishment of our Lord's principal design.

Its being very notorious, and lasting a competent time were good advantages ; for if he had been privately made away, or suddenly dispatched, no such great notice would have been taken of it, nor would the matter of fact it self have been so fully proved to the confirmation of our faith, and conviction of infidelity ; nor had that his excellent deportment under such bitter affliction (his most divine patience, meekness and charity) so illustriously shone forth : Wherefore (to prevent all exceptions, and excuses of unbelief, and for other collateral good purposes) divine providence did so manage the business, that as the course of his life, so also the manner of his death should be most conspicuous and remarkable ; *These things* (as S. Paul told King Agrippa) *were not done in a corner ;* and, *I, said our Lord himself, spake freely to the world ; and in secret have I done nothing :* So were the proceedings of his life, not close or clancular, but frank and open ; not presently hushed up, but carryed on leisurely in the face of the world ; that men might have the advantage to observe and examine them. And as he lived so he died most publicly and visibly, the world being witness of his death, and so prepared to believe his resurrection, and thence ready to embrace his doctrine ;

Acts 26. 26.
John 18. 20.

John 12. 32.

John 13. 14.

according to what he did himself foretell, *I being lifted up from the earth, shall draw all men unto me ;* he drew all men by so remarkable a death to take notice of it, he drew some from the wondrous consequences of it to believe on him : And, *As, saith he again, Moses did exalt the Serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of man be exalted :* The elevation of that mysterious Serpent upon a pole did render it visible, and attracted the eyes of people toward it ; whereby God's power invisibly accompanying that Sacramental performance, they were cured of those

those mortiferous stings which they had received ; so our Lord being mounted on the Cross, allured the eyes of men to behold, and their hearts to close with him : whereby the heavenly vertue of God's spirit cooperating, they become saved from those destructive sins, which by the Devil's serpentine instigations, they had incurred.

Another advantage of this kind of suffering was, that by it the nature of that Kingdom, which he intended to erect, was evidently signified ; that it was not such as the carnal people did expect, an external, earthly, temporal Kingdom, consisting in domination over the bodies and estates of men, dignified by outward wealth and splendor, managed by worldly power and policy, promoted by force and terror of arms, affording to men the advantages of outward safety, peace and prosperity ; but a kingdom purely spiritual, heavenly, eternal ; consisting in the government of mens hearts and spirits ; adorned with endowments of piety and vertue, administred by the grace and guidance of God's Holy Spirit, maintained and propagated by meek instruction, by vertuous example, by hearty devotion and humble patience ; rewarding its loyal subjects with spiritual joys and consolations here, with endless rest and blifs hereafter ; no other kingdom could he be presumed to design, who submitted to this dolorous and disgraceful way of suffering ; no other exploits could he pretend to atchieve by expiring on a Cross, no other way could he govern who gave himself up to be managed by the will of his enemies ; no other benefits would that forlorn case allow him to dispense ; so that well might he assert, *My kingdom is not of this world*, when he was going in this signal manner to demonstrate that great truth. It was a touch-stone to prove mens disposition, and to discriminate the ingenuous, well-disposed, humble and sober persons, who would entertain our Lord's heavenly doctrine with acceptance, notwithstanding these disadvantages, *not being offended in him*, from those perverse, vain, proud, profane people, who being scandalized at his adversity would reject him. Rom. 14. John 18. 36.

Another advantage was this, that by it God's special providence was discovered, and his glory illustrated in the propagation of the Gospel, for how could it be, that a person of so low parentage, of so mean garb, of so poor condition, who underwent so woful and despicable a kind of death, falling under the pride and spite of his adversaries, should so easily gain so general an opinion in the world (among the best, the wisest, the greatest persons) of being *the Lord of life and glory* ; How, I say, could it be, that such a miracle should be effected without God's aid and special concurrence ? that *Herod*, who from a long reign in a flourishing state, with prosperous success in his undertakings, got the name of *Great* ; or that *Vespasian*, who triumphantly did ascend the Imperial throne, should either of them by a few admirers of worldly vanity, seriously or in flattery, be deemed the *Messias*, is not so very strange ; but that one who so miserably was trampled on, and created as a wretched caitiffe, should instantly conquer innumerable hearts, and from such a depth of extreme adversity should attain the sublimest pitch of glory ; that *the stone, which the builders with so much scorn did refuse, should become the head stone of the corner*, this (with good assurance we may say) *is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes*. It may well be so, and thereby the excellency of divine power and wisdom was much glorified ; by so impotent, so implausible and improbable means, accomplishing so great effects ; subduing the world to his obedience, not by the active valour of an illustrious *Heroe*, but thro' the penitent submission of a poor, abused and oppressed person ; restoring Mankind to life by the death of a crucified Saviour. Chryl. Tom. 6. Or. 61. Psal. 118. 22. 2 Cor. 4. 7. 1 Cor. 1. 27.

Again, this kind of suffering to the devout *Fathers* did seem many ways significant, or full of instructive and admonitive emblems ; being a rich and large field, for a devout fancy to range with affectionate meditation.

His posture on the Cross might represent unto us that large and comprehensive charity which he bare in his heart toward us, stretching forth his arms of kindness, pity and mercy, with them as it were to embrace the world, receiving all mankind under the wings of his gracious protection. Extendit in passione manus suas, &c. Laet. IV. p. 437.

It might exhibit him as earnestly woeing, and intreating us to return unto God, accepting the reconciliation which he then was purchasing, and did then offer to us : *I have spread out my hands all the day unto a rebellious people*, said God of old, doing it then mediately and figurately by his Prophets, but he did so now immediately Isa. 65. 2.

diately and properly by himself; the Cross being as a Pulpit, from which our Lord God blessed for ever, did himself in person earnestly preach the overtures of grace, did exhort to repentance, did tender the remission of sin, with action most pathetical and affecting.

Levit. 9. 22. His assent to the Cross might set forth his discharging that high office of universal High-Priest for all Ages, and all People; the Cross being an Altar, whereon he did offer up his own flesh, and pour forth his blood, as a pure and perfect sacrifice, propitiating God and expiating the sins of mankind.

Quod unquam sacrificium
sacratius fuit, quam quod verus Pontifex altari crucis per immolationem sue carnis imposuit? Leo M. Ep. 83.
Luke 18. 4.
Matt. 23. 12.
1 Pet. 5. 5.
Jam. 4. 10.
Phil. 2. 8, 9.
His elevation thither may suggest to our thoughts, that submission to God's will, suffering for truth and righteousness, the exercises of humility and patience are conjoined with exaltation, do qualify for, and in effect procure true preferment; so that the lower we stoop in humility, the higher we shall rise in favour with God, the nearer we shall approach to heaven, the surer we shall be of God's blessing, according to that Aphorism of our Lord, *Whoever humbleth himself shall be exalted*. The Cross was a Throne, whereon humility and patience did sit in high state and glorious Majesty, advanced above all worldly pride and insolence; It was a great step, a sure assent unto the celestial throne of dignity superlative; for because our Lord *was obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross, therefore did God far exalt him above all dignity and power in heaven and earth*, as S. Paul doth teach us.

O the fallacy of humane sense! O the vanity of carnal judgment! nothing ever was more auspicious, or more happy than this event which had so dismal an aspect, and provoked so contemptuous scorn in some, so grievous pity in others; The Devil thought he had done bravely, when he had by his suggestions brought the Son of God into this case; the World supposed it self highly prosperous in its attempts against him; but O how blind and foolish is malice, which then doth most hurt it self, when it triumpheth in the mischief which it doeth to others! How impotent is wickedness, which is never more thoroughly ruined than by its own greatest success? for by thus striving to debase our Lord, they most highly did advance him; by thus crossing our salvation they most effectually did promote it.

Farther, looking up to the Cross may admonish us how our salvation is acquired, and whence it doth proceed; not by casting our eyes downward, not from any thing that lyeth upon earth; but *our help cometh from above*, our salvation is attained by looking upwards; we must lift up our eyes to behold our Saviour procuring it, we must raise up our hearts to derive it from him.

Our Lord's crucifixion may also intimate to us, how our flesh must be dealt with, and to what usage we must submit it; for we must not only imitate our Saviour in his holy life, but in some manner should resemble him in his gasty death; being (as S. Paul speaketh) *conformable to his death*, and *planted together with him in the likeness of it*; *mortifying our earthly members, crucifying the flesh with its affections and lusts*; having our *old man crucified together with Christ, that the body of sin may be destroyed*. His death may fitly shadow our death to sin, his grievous pain the bitterness of our repentance, wherein our souls should be pierced with sharp compunction, as his sacred flesh was torn with nails; his shame that confusion of mind, which regard to our offences should produce within us.

Συμμορφούμενοι τῷ θανάτῳ αὐτοῦ.

Phil. 3. 10.

Rom. 6. 5.

Gal. 2. 20.

5. 24.

Col. 3. 5.

Rom. 8. 13.

Passio ipsa per se acerba &

amara specimen

nobis futuro-

rum tormento-

rum datur,

quam in hoc se-

culo moranti-

bus virtus ip-

sa proponit—

Lact. lib. 4.

* 1 Thef. 3. 3.

† Rom. 8. 29.

Acts 14. 22.

2 Tim. 3. 12.

Reflecting on him we may also discern our state here; wherein, if we will be truly and thoroughly virtuous, we must be exposed to envy and hatred, to censure and obloquy, to contempt and scorn, to affliction and hardship; Every good man must hang on some cross; *eis τὸν κελυστέρα*, * *We are*, saith S. Paul, *appointed to this*, 'tis our lot and portion assigned to us by divine immutable decree; being *† predestinated to a conformity with this image of God's son*. *We must*, as he did, *by many tribulations enter into the Kingdom of God*; *All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall certainly suffer persecution*, one way or other partaking of his cross.

Divers such analogies and resemblances devout meditation might extract from this matter, suggesting practical truths, and exciting good affections in us.

V. We may (for the confirmation of our faith and begetting in us a due adoration of the divine wisdom and providence) observe the correspondency of this our Saviour's manner of suffering to the ancient Prophecies foretelling, and the typical representations foreshewing it.

That

That most famous, clear and complete Prophecy concerning the passion, doth express him suffering as a malefactor (*he was reckoned among the transgressors*) suffering in a manner very painful (*he was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities*) suffering in a most ignominious way (*he was despised, and rejected of men, as a man of sorrow, and acquainted with grief*) which circumstances could scarce so punctually agree to any other kind of suffering, or punishment then used, as to this.

In the 22d Psalm, the Royal Prophet describeth an afflicted and forlorn condition, such as by no passages in the story concerning him doth in the full extent, and according to the literal signification of his words, appear suitable to his person, which therefore is more properly to be accommodated unto the *Messias*, whom he did represent; and in that description, among other passages agreeing to our Lord, these words do occur, *Thou hast brought me into the dust of death; for dogs have compassed me, the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me; they pierced my hands and my feet*; which words how patly and livelily do they set out our Saviour's being nailed to the cross, and treated in that cruel, and in that shameful way by his malicious adversaries?

In the Prophet *Zechariah*, God speaking in his own name, *They* (namely some of the *Jews*, being sensible of what they had acted, and penitently affected for it, they) *shall look upon me whom they have pierced*; which words need no violence to wring from them the right meaning, no comment to explain them, in accommodation to that matter, to which the *Evangelists* do apply them, and to which they are so literally congruous.

The same was also fitly prefigured by apposite types. *Isaac*, the immediate heir of the promise, in whom the faithful seed was called and conveyed down, and so a most apt type of our Saviour, being devoted and offered up to God, did himself bear the wood by which he was to be offered; So did our Saviour, the promised seed, in whom all nations should be blessed, himself bear the cross by which he was to suffer, and to be offered up a sacrifice to God.

Those who were dangerously bitten by fiery Serpents, were, by looking upon a brazen Serpent set upon a pole, preserved in life, which (according to most authentic exposition) did represent the salvation, which should proceed from our beholding and believing on him lifted up upon the cross to us, who had been mortally struck and stung by that old Serpent's poisonous insinuations.

The Paschal Lamb was a most congruous emblem of *Christ our passover* (that most innocent and meek, unblemished and spotless Lamb, slain for the sins of the world) It was to be killed by the whole assembly of the congregation of *Israel*, its blood was to be dashed on the side-posts and cross-beams of every door; its body was not to be eaten raw, nor sodden with water, but roasted whole, and dressed upon a spit; nor were any of its bones to be broken; which circumstances, with so exact caution and care prescribed, how they justly suite and fitly adumbrate this manner of our Saviour's passion, I need not otherwise than by the bare mention of them declare; every one easily being able to compare and adapt them.

VI. Lastly, the consideration of our Lord's thus suffering is applicable to our practice; being most apt to instruct and affect us; admonishing us of our duty, and exciting us to a conscientious performance thereof: No contemplation indeed is more fruitful, or more efficacious toward the sanctification of our hearts and lives, than this of the cross; For what good affection may not the meditation on it kindle? What vertue may it not breed and cherish in us?

1. How can it otherwise than enflame our heart with love toward our Lord, to think what acerbity of pain, what indignity of shame he did willingly undertake, and gladly endure for us? No imagination can devise a greater expression of charity and friendship; and if love naturally is productive of love, if friendship meriteth a correspondence in kindness. What effect should the consideration of such inestimable love, of so incomparable friendship have upon us?

2. How can a reflection on this case otherwise than work hearty gratitude in us? Suppose any person for our sake (that he might rescue us from the greatest mischiefs, and purchase for us the highest benefits) willingly should deprive himself of all his estate, his honour, his ease and pleasure, should expose himself to extremest hazards, should endure the forest pains, and most disgraceful ignominies should prostitute his life, and lose it in the most hideous manner: Should we not then

then be monstrously ingrateful if we did not most deeply resent such kindness; if upon all occasions we did not express our thankfulness for it; if we did not ever readily yield all the acknowledgment, and all the requital we were able? the case in regard to our Lord is the same in kind, but in degree whatever we can suppose doth infinitely fall below the performances for us of him who stooped from the top of heaven, who laid aside the felicity and Majesty of God, for the sorrows and infamies of the Cross, that he might redeem us from the torments of hell, and procure to us the joys of heaven; so that our obligation to gratitude is unexpressibly great, and we are extremely unworthy if the effects in our heart and life be not answerable.

Rom. 8. 32. 3. What surer ground of faith in God, or stronger encouragement of hope can there be, than is hence afforded to us? for, if God spared not his own son, but delivered him up for our sake to the suffering of these bitter pains and contumelies; How can we in any case distrust his bounty, or despair of his mercy? How, as S. Paul argueth, shall he not also with him freely give us all things; What higher favour could God express, what lower condescension could he shew; how more plainly or surely could he testify his willingness and his delight to do us good, than by ordering the Son of his love to undergo these most grievous things for us? How consequently could there be laid a stronger foundation of our hope, and entire confidence in God?

Phil. 2. 8. 4. What greater engagement (in general) can there be to obedience, than to consider how readily and chearfully our Lord did submit to the will of God, in bearing the most heavy yoke that could be imposed on him, in drinking the most bitter cup that could be tempered for him: how that he did humble himself, being obedient unto death, even the death of the cross? How dearly did he purchase his property in us, and dominion over us?

What detestation of our sins must the serious consideration of this event produce in us? of our sins, that brought such tortures and such reproaches on our blessed Redeemer. Judas the wretch who betray'd him; the Jewish Priests who did accuse and prosecute him; the wicked rout which abused and insulted over him; those cruel hands that smote him, those pitiless hearts that scorn'd him, those poisonous tongues that mocked and reviled him; all those, who any-wise were instruments or abettors of his affliction; How do we loath them? How do we detest and curse their memories? But how much greater reason have we to abominate our sins, which were the principal causes of all that woful tragedy? Rom. 4. 25. 2 Cor. 5. 21. He was delivered for our offences, they were indeed the traitors, which by the hands of Judas delivered him up: He that knew no sin was made sin for us; that is, was accused, was condemned, was executed as a sinner for us; it was therefore we who by our sins did impeach him, the spiteful Priests were but our advocates; we by them did adjudge and sentence him, Pilate (against his will and conscience) was but our spokesman; we by them did inflict that horrid punishment on him, Gal. 3. 13. the Roman Executioners were but our agents therein. He became a curse for us, that is, all the mockery, derision and contumely he endured did proceed from us; the silly people were but properties, acting our parts; our sins were they that cried out crucifige, (crucifige him, crucifige him) with clamours more loud and more effectual, than did all the Jewish rabble; it was they, which by the borrowed throats of that base people, did so outrageously persecute him; He was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities; it was they which by the hands of the fierce soldiers and of the rude poplacy, as by senseless engines, did buffet and scourge him; they by the nails and thorns did pierce his flesh, and rend his sacred body; upon them therefore it is most just and fit that we should turn our hatred, that we should discharge our indignation.

5. And what in reason can be more powerful to the breeding in us remorse and penitent sorrow, than reflection upon such horrible effects proceeding from our sins? How can we but earnestly grieve, when we consider our selves by them to have been the betrayers, the slanderers, the murderers of a person so innocent and lovely, of one so great and glorious, of God's dear Son, and the Lord of all things, of our own best friend, and most kind Saviour?

(Matt. 27.

45, 51.
Luk. 23. 44.)

6. If ingenuity will not operate so far, and hereby melt us into contrition, yet surely this consideration must needs produce some fear within us: For can we at least otherwise than tremble to think upon the heinous guilt of our sins, upon

upon the fierceness of God's wrath against them, upon the severity of divine judgment for them, all so manifestly discovered, all so lively set forth in this dismal spectacle? If the view of an ordinary execution is apt to beget in us some terror, some dread of the Law, some reverence toward Authority, What awful impressions should this singular example of divine justice work upon us? How greatly we should be moved thereby, we may learn from the deportment of the most inanimate creatures: The whole World did seem affected thereat with horror; the frame of things was disturbed, all nature did feel a kind of compassion and compunction for it; the Sun (as out of aversion, or shame) did hide his face, leaving the earth covered for three hours with mournful blackness; the bowels of the earth did yern and quake; the rocks were rent; the veil of the Temple was torn quite through; graves did open, and the bodies did wake: And can we (who are most concerned) be more stupid than the earth, more obdurate than rocks, more drowsie than buried carcases, the most insensible and immoveable things in nature?

7. How also can it but hugely deter us from wilful commission of sin, to consider, that by it we do (as the *Apostle* teacheth) *re-crucifie the Son of God*, and again *expose him to open shame*; bringing upon the stage, and acting over all that direful Tragedy; renewing (as to our guilt) all that pain, and that disgrace to him; that we thereby (as he telleth us) do *trample upon the Son of God*, and *prize the blood of the covenant* (that most sacred and precious blood, so freely shed for the demonstration of God's mercy, and the ratification of his gracious intentions toward us) *as a common thing*; of no special worth, or consideration with us; despising all his so kind and painful endeavours for our salvation, defeating his most gracious purposes and earnest desires for our welfare; rendring all his so bitter and loathsome sufferings, in regard to us, altogether vain and fruitless; yea indeed hurtful and pernicious; for if the cross do not save us from our sins, it will sorely aggravate their guilt, and augment their punishment; bringing a severer condemnation, and a sadder ruin on us.

8. It may also yield great consolation and joy to us, to contemplate our Lord upon the cross, expressing his immense goodness and charity toward us; transacting our redemption; expiating our sins, and sustaining our miseries; combating and defeating all the adversaries of our salvation.

Is it not comfortable and pleasant to behold him there standing erect, not only as a resolute sufferer, but as a glorious conqueror; where *having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a solemn shew, triumphing over them*? No Conqueror loftily seated in his triumphal chariot did ever yield a spectacle so gallant or magnificent; no tree was ever adorned with trophies so pompous or precious: to the external view and carnal sense of men our Lord was then exposed to scorn and shame; but to spiritual and true discerning, all his and our enemies did there hang up as objects of contempt, quite overthrown and undone: there the Devil, *that strong and sturdy one* did hang bound and fettered, disarmed and spoiled, utterly baffled and confounded; there death it self hung gasping, with its sting plucked out, and all its terrors quelled; his death having prevented ours, and purchased immortality for us. There the world with its vain pomps, its counterfeit beauties, its fondly admired excellencies, its bewitching pleasures, did hang up all disparaged and defaced; as it appeared to *S. Paul*, *God forbid (said he) that I should glory, save in the Cross of Christ, by which the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world*. There *our sins*, those sins, which (as *S. Peter* saith) *our Saviour did carry up unto the gibbet*, did hang, as marks of his victorious prowess, as objects of our horror and hatred, as malefactors by him *condemned in the flesh*. There that manifold enmity (enmity between God and man, between one man and another, between man and his own self or conscience) did hang *abolished in his flesh, and slain upon the cross; by the blood whereof he made peace, and reconciled all things in heaven and earth*. The blood of the cross was the cement, joining the parts of the world: There together with all our enemies did hand all those causes of woe and misery to us, those yokes of bondage, those instruments of vexation, those hard laws, which did so much burthen and encumber men, did set them at such distance and variance, did so far subject them to guilt and condemnation; all *that bond of ordinances*, inducing our obligation to

Ἀναστασίου
Heb. 6. 6.

Heb. 10. 29.

Col. 2. 15.

Matt. 12.

Luke 11.

22.

Heb. 2. 14.

1 Cor. 15. 54.

2 Tim. 1. 10.

Ἀνέβησαν

ἐπὶ τὸ ξύλον

1 Pet. 2. 24.

Rom. 8. 3.

Col. 1. 10.

Eph. 2. 15.

16.

Col. 2. 14. so grievous forfeitures and penalties, was *nailed to the cross*, being cancelled and expunged by our Saviour's performances there.

9. This consideration is a strong inducement to the practice of charity toward our neighbour : for can we forbear to love those, toward whom our Lord bore such tender affection, for whom he did sustain so woful tortures and indignities ? Shall we not in obedience to his most urgent commands, in conformity to his most notable example, in grateful return to him for his benefits, who thus did suffer for us, discharge this most sweet and easie duty toward his beloved friends ? Shall we not comport with an infirmity, or bear a petty neglect, or forgive a small injury to our brother, whenas our Lord did bear a cross for us, and from us, obtaining pardon for our numberless most heinous affronts and offences against God ? 'Tis S. Paul's reasoning, *We that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak* — for even Christ pleased not himself, but as it is written, *The reproaches of them that reproached thee, fell on me*. Can we hear our Lord say, *This is my command, that ye love one another, as I have loved you* ; and, *Hereby shall all men know, that ye are my disciples, if ye love one another* ? Can we hear S. Paul exhorting, *Walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour* ? Can we consider S. John's arguing, *Beloved, if God so loved us, then ought we also to love one another* ; *Hereby we perceive the love of God, because he laid down his life for us, wherefore we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren* ? Can, I say, we consider such discourses, without being disposed to comply with them for the sake of our crucified Saviour ; all whose life and death were nothing else but one continual recommendation and enforcement of this duty ?

10. Farthermore, What can be more operative than this consideration, toward breeding a disregard of this world with all its deceitful vanities and mischievous delights, toward reconciling our minds to the worst condition, it can bring us into, toward supporting our hearts under the heaviest pressures of affliction it can lay upon us ; How can we refuse, in submission to God's pleasure, to bear contentedly a slight grievance, when he, as he gladly did, bore a cross infinitely more grievous to carnal will and sense, than any that can befall us ? Can we expect, can we affect, can we desire great prosperity, when as the Son of God, our Lord and Master did only taste such adversity ? Who can admire those splendid trifles which our Lord did never regard in his life, which at his death did only serve to mock and abuse him ? Who can relish those sordid pleasures, of which he living did not vouchsafe to taste, and the contraries whereof he dying chose to feel in all extremity ? Who will dare to vilifie, to disdain, to reject a state of sorrow, or disgrace, which he by a voluntary susception of it hath so dignified and graced ; by which we resemble, and become conformable to him ; by which we concur and partake with him : yea by which we may promote, and in a sort complete his designs ; *filling up* (as S. Paul speaketh) *that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in our flesh* ? Who now can much prefer being esteemed, applauded, approved or favoured by men, before infamy, reproach, derision or persecution from them, especially when these do follow conscientious adherence to righteousness ? Who can be very ambitious of worldly honour, or repute, covetous of wealth, or greedy of pleasure, who observeth the only Son of God chusing rather to hang upon a cross, than to sit upon a throne ; inviting the clamours of spite and scorn, rather than acclamations of blessing and praise, devesting himself of all secular pomp, plenty, conveniences and solaces ; embracing the garb of a slave, and the repute of a malefactor, before the dignity and respect of a Prince, which were his due, and which he easily could have obtained ? Can we imagine it a very happy thing to be high and prosperous in this world, to swim here in affluence and pleasure ; can we take it for a misery to be mean and low, to conflict with any wants or straits here, seeing the fountain of all happiness did himself condescend to so forlorn a state, and was pleased to become so deep a sufferer ? If with the eyes of our mind we do behold our Lord hanging naked upon a gibbet, besmeared with his own blood, groaning under extream anguish of pain, encompassed with all sorts of disgraceful abuses, *yielding* (as the Prophet foretold of him) *his back to the smiters, and his cheeks to them who plucked off the hair, hiding not his face from shame and spitting* ; will not the imagination of such a Sight dim

Rom. 8. 17.
Phil. 3. 10.
Apoc. 1. 9.
1 Pet. 4. 13.
Col. 1. 24.
Ἀναπαλη-
πὰρ τὰ ὕστε-
ρα.

Cogitemus cru-
cem ejus, &
divitias lutum
putabimus.

Hier. Ep. 2.
(ad Nepor.)
Quis beatam
vitam esse ar-
bitretur in iis,
qua contemen-
da esse docuit
filius Dei ?
Aug. de Ag.
Ch. c. 11.

Isa. 50.

dim the lustre of all earthly grandeurs and beauties, damp the sense of all carnal delights and satisfactions, quash all the glee which we can find in any wild frolicks, or riotous merriments?

11. It is surely a great commendation of afflictions, and a strong consolation under them to ponder well this point; for if hardship was to our Lord a school of duty, *he* (as the *Apostle* saith) *learning obedience from what he suffered*; if it was to him an instrument of perfection, as the same *Apostle* implyeth, when he saith, that *it became God to perfect the Captain of our salvation by suffering*; if it was a means of procuring the divine favour even to him, as those words import, *Therefore the Father loveth me, because I lay down my life*; if it was to him a step unto glory, according to that saying, *Was not Christ to suffer, and so to enter into his glory?* yea if it was a ground of conferring on him that sublimest pitch of dignity above all creatures as we are taught; for *because* (saith *S. Paul*) *he was obedient to death, even the death of the cross, therefore did God exalt him, and gave him a name above every name*; and, *We see Jesus* (saith the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews*) *for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honour*; and, *worthy* (cryeth out the heavenly society in the *Revelations*) *is the Lamb that was slain* (and who re- deemed us to God by his blood) *to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing*: If affliction did minister such advantages to him; and if by our conformity to him in undergoing it with like submission, humility and patience, it may afford the like to us, what reason can there be that we should any-wise be discomposed, discouraged or disconsolate under it: much more reason surely there is, that with *S. Paul*, and all the *Holy Apostles*, we should boast, rejoice and exult in our tribulations; far more cause we have with them to esteem it a favour, a privilege, and an ornament to us, than to be discontented, or displeased therewith. To do thus is a duty incumbent on us as Christians; for *He* (saith our *Master*) *that doth not take up his cross and follow me, is not worthy of me*; *He that doth not carry his cross, and go after me, cannot be my disciple*: He that doth not willingly take the Cross, when it is presented to him by God's hand, he that doth not contentedly bear it, when it is by providence imposed on him, is no-wise worthy of the honour to wait on Christ, he is not capable to be reckoned among the disciples of our heavenly Master; He is not worthy of Christ, as not having the courage, the constancy, the sincerity required of a Christian; of one pretending to such great benefits, such high privileges, such excellent rewards, as Christ our Lord and Saviour doth propose; He cannot be Christ's disciple, shewing such incapacity to learn those needful lessons of humility and patience dictated by him; declaring such an indisposition to transcribe those copies of submission to divine will, self-denial and self-resignation so fairly set him by the instruction and example of Christ: *For as much then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm your selves likewise with the same mind*: And, *Christ suffered for us, leaving us an example that we should follow his steps*, saith *S. Peter*.

12. The willing susception, and the chearful sustenance of the cross is indeed the express condition, and the proper character of our Christianity; in signification whereof it hath been from immemorial time a constant usage to mark those who enter into it with the figure of the cross. The cross, as the instrument, by which our peace with God was wrought, as the stage whereon our Lord did act the last part of his miraculous obedience, consummating our redemption; as the field, wherein the *Captain of our salvation* did achieve his noble victory, and erect his glorious trophies over all the enemies thereof, was well assumed to be the badge of our profession, the ensign of our spiritual warfare, the pledge of our constant adherence to our crucified Saviour; in relation to whom our chief hope is grounded, our great joy and sole glory doth consist; for *God forbid*, saith *S. Paul*, *that I should glory save in the cross of Christ*.

Let it be to the *Jews* a scandal, or offensive to their fancy prepossessed with expectations of a *Messias* flourishing in secular pomp and prosperity; let it be folly to the *Greeks*; or seem absurd to men imbued (puff'd up, corrupted) with fleshly notions and maxims of worldly craft, disposing men to value nothing, which is not grateful to present sense or fancy; that God should put his own most beloved Son into so very sad and despicable a condition; that salvation from death

Orig. in Celf.
lib. 2. p. 29.

1 Tim. 1. 15.
2 Tim. 2. 11.

Grot. de Ver.
4. 12.

Plat. de Rep. 2. (p. 594.)

Magnum exemplum, nisi mala fortuna
non invenit. — Sen. de Prov. 3.

Plut. de Stoic. contr. p. 1931.

Socrates, Phocion, Thræceas, Aristi-
des, &c.

Vid. Ælian. Var. 11. 9. 2. 43.

Cicuta Socratem magnum fecit, &c. Sen.
Ep. 13. & 67, & 104.

Sen. Ep. 81. Ep. 113.

Rutilii innocentia ac virtus lateret,
nisi accepisset injuriam; dum violatur
effulset.
Sen. Ep. 79.

and misery should be procured by so miserable a death; that eternal joy, glory and happiness should issue from these fountains of extream sorrow and shame; that a person in external semblance, devoted to so opprobrious and slavish usage, should be the Lord and Redeemer of Mankind, the King and Judge of all the World: Let this doctrine, I say, be scandalous and distastful to some persons tainted with prejudice, let it appear strange and incredible to others blinded with self-conceit; let all the proud, all the profane, all the inconsiderate part of mankind slight and reject it; yet to us it must appear grateful and joyous; to us, it is *ἡ ἀληθὴς ἀγάπη*, a faithful (and credible) proposition, worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world thus to save sinners; to us, who discern by a clearer light, and are endued with a purer sense, kindled by the divine spirit; from whence with comfortable satisfaction of mind we may apprehend and taste, that God could not in a higher measure, or a fitter manner illustrate his glorious attributes of goodness and justice; his infinite grace and mercy toward his poor creatures; his holy displeasure against wickedness; his impartial severity in punishing iniquity and impiety; or in vindicating his own honour and authority; than by thus ordering his Son to suffer for us; that also true virtue and goodness could not otherwise be taught, be exemplified, be commended and impressed with greater advantage.

We might alledge the suffrages of eminent Philosophers, persons esteemed most wise by improvement of natural light; who have declared, that perfection of virtue can hardly be produced, or expressed otherwise than by undergoing most sharp afflictions and tortures; and that God therefore, as a wise Father, is wont with them to exercise those whom he best loveth; we might also produce instances of divers persons, even among Pagans, most famous and honourable in the judgment of all posterity for their singular virtue and wisdom, who were tryed in this furnace, and thereby shone most brightly; their suffering by the iniquity and ingratitude, by the envy and malignity of their times in their reputation, liberty and life; their undergoing foul slanders, infamous punishments, and ignominious deaths, more than any other practices of their life, recommending them to the regard and admiration of future ages; although none of them, as our Lord, did suffer of choice, or upon design to advance the interests of goodness, but upon constraint, and irresistible force put on them; none of them did suffer in a manner so signal, with circumstances so rare, and with events so wonderful; yet suffering as they did was their chief glory; whence it seemeth, that even according to the sincerest dictates of common wisdom this dispensation was not so unaccountable; nor ought the Greeks in consistency with themselves, and in respect to their own admired Philosophy, to have deemed our doctrine of the cross, foolish, or unreasonable.

To conclude; since thereby a charity and humanity so unparallel'd (far transcending theirs who have been celebrated for devoting their lives out of love to their Country, or kindness to their friends) a meekness so incomparable, a resolution so invincible, a patience so heroical were manifested for the instruction and direction of men: Since never were the vices and the vanities of the world (so prejudicial to the welfare of mankind) so remarkably disparaged; since never any suffering could pretend to so worthy and beneficial effects; the expiation of the whole worlds sin, and reconciliation of mankind to God, such as no performance beside, nor any other sacrifice did ever aim to procure, since, in fine, no virtue had ever so glorious rewards, or Sovereign dignity to him that exercised it, and eternal happiness to those who imitate it: Since, I say, there be such excellent uses, and fruits of the cross born by our Blessed Saviour, we can have no reason to be offended at it, or ashamed of it; but with all reason heartily we should approve, and humbly adore as well the deep wisdom of God, as all other his glorious attributes, illustriously displayed therein; to whom therefore as is most due let us devoutly render all thanks, all praise and glory.

And, Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his blood, and hath ^{Apoc. 1. 5.} made us Kings and Priests unto God, and his Father, to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever.

Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power be unto him, that sitteth upon the throne, ^{Apoc. 5. 13.} and unto the Lamb for ever and ever, Amen.

Dead and Buried.

S E R M O N XXVII.

I C O R. XV. 3.

For I delivered unto you first of all, that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures.



Aint Paul meaning in this Chapter to maintain a very fundamental Point of our Religion (*the resurrection of the dead*) against some *Infidels* or *Hereticks*, who among the *Corinthians*, his scholars in the faith, did oppose it; doth, in order to the proof of his assertion, and refutation of that pernicious error, premise those doctrines, which he having received both from the relation of the other *Apostles*, and by immediate revelation from God himself, had delivered unto them, *ἐν πρώτοις*, in the first place, or among the prime things; that is as most eminent and important points of Christian doctrine; the truths whereof consequently (standing upon the same foundations with Christianity it self, upon Divine Revelation, and Apostolical testimony) could no-wise be disputed of, or doubted by any good Christian. Of which doctrines (the collection of which he styleth *the Gospel*; that *Gospel*, by embracing and retaining which, they were, he saith, *to be saved*) the first is that in our Text, concerning the death of our Lord, undergone by him for our salvation: which point as of all others in our Religion it is of peculiar consequence, so it much concerneth us both firmly to believe it, and well to understand it; for it is by faith in his blood that we are justified, and by knowing Christ crucified we shall be chiefly edified; the word imparting this knowledge being *the power of God to salvation*. It therefore I mean now, by God's assistance, to explain and apply; the which I shall do generally and absolutely; without any particular accommodation of my discourse to the words of this Text; yet so as to comprehend all the particulars observable in them. The death of our Lord then is my subject, and about it I shall consider,

1. Its nature, or wherein it did consist.
2. Some peculiar adjuncts and respects thereof, which commend it to our regard, and tender it considerable to us.
3. The principles and (impressive and meritorious) causes thereof.
4. The ends which it aimed at; together with the fruits and effects of it.
5. Some practical influences; which the consideration thereof may, and should have upon us.

Rom. 3. 25.
1 Cor. 2. 2.
Rom. 1. 16.
Phil. 3.
10.

1. As for the nature of it we must affirm, and believe assuredly, that it was a true and proper death; in kind not different from that death, to the which all we mortal creatures are by the law and condition of our nature subject, and which we must all some time undergo; for, *What man is he that liveth and shall not see death; that shall deliver his soul from the hand of the grave? that death, which is signified by cessation from vital operations (of all motions natural, or voluntary, of all sense and knowledge, appetite and passion) that death, which is caused by violent disunion, or dislocation, by distempering, or however indisposing the parts,*

- parts, humours, spirits of the body, so that the soul can no longer in them and by them continue to exercise those functions, for which its conjunction thereto was

intended, and cannot therefore fully reside therein; *that death*, which is supposed to consist in the dissolution of that vital band, whatever it be, whereby the soul is link'd and united to the body; or in that which is thereupon consequent, the separation, department and absence of the soul from the body; each of that couple, upon their divorce, returning home

—'Επειτα πρῶτα λίπη λεικ' ὅσα
 θυμὸς,
 Ψυχὴ δ' αὖτ' ὄντες διατλαμένη πᾶσι
 ταῖς.
 Hom. *Odyss.* 1.

to their original principles as it were; the body *to the earth from whence it was taken*, and the spirit unto God who gave it. Such causes antecedent are specified in the story; such signs following are plainly implied, such a state is expressed in the very terms, whereby our death is commonly signified; the same extremity of anguish, the same dilaceration of parts, the same effusion of blood, which would destroy our vital temper, quench our natural heat, stop our animal motions, exhaust our spirits, and force out our breath, did work upon him; necessarily producing the like effects on him, as who had assumed the common imper-

Acts 3. 15. 8. 33. Dan. 9. 26. Isa.
 53. 8. John 18. 4. 11. 50. Apoc.
 5. 9.

fections and infirmities of our nature; in regard to which violences inflicted upon him, he is said, ἀποκτείνεσθαι, *to be killed or slain*; διαχειρίζεσθαι, *to be dispatched*, ἀναρριπίζεσθαι, *to be made away*, ἀπολίσθαι, *to perish*, or be destroyed; ἐξολοθρεύεσθαι, *to be cut off* (as it is in *Daniel*) σφάττεσθαι, *to be slaughtered*; θύεσθαι, *to be sacrificed*; which words do all of them fully import a real and proper death to have ensued upon those violent usages toward him.

And by the ordinary signs of death, apparent to sense, the soldiers judg'd him dead, and therefore, ὡς ἑδον ἤδη τεθνηκότα, *seeing him already dead, they forbore to break his legs*; by the same all the World was satisfy'd thereof, both his spiteful enemies, that stood with delight, waiting for this utmost success of their malicious endeavours to destroy him, and his loving friends, who with compassionate respect attended upon him through the course of his suffering; and those who were ready to perform their last offices of kindness, in procuring a decent interment of his body.

His transition also, and abiding in this state, are expressed by terms declaring the propriety of his death, and its agreement with our death: S. Mark telleth us, that ἐξέπνευσεν, *animam efflavit*, he expired, breathed out his soul, or his last breath; S. Matthew ἀφίκα τὸ πνεῦμα, *animam egit*, he let go his spirit, or gave up the ghost; S. John, παρέδωκε τὸ πνεῦμα, *he delivered up his spirit* into God's hand; the which Saint Luke expresseth done with a formal resignation, *Father, said he, into thy hands I commend* (or I dispose) *my spirit*; he doth also himself frequently express his dying by *laying down his life*, and *bestowing it as a ransom*, which sheweth him really to have parted with it.

His death also (as ours is wont to be denoted by like phrases) is termed ἐξόδος, *excessus à vivis*, a going out of life, or from the society of men (for Moses and Elias are said to tell, τὴν ἐξόδον αὐτοῦ, *his decease, which he should accomplish at Jerusalem*) and μετέθεσις, a passing over, or translation from this into another world (When, saith S. John, Jesus knew that his time was come, ἵνα μετέβῃ, *that he should depart from this world.*) His death also was enigmatically described by the destruction, or demolition of his bodily Temple, answerable to those circumlocutions concerning our ordinary death; *the dissolution of our earthly house or tabernacle*, or transitory abode, in S. Paul, the ἀποδοῖς τῷ σαρνέματι, *laying down, or putting off our tabernacle*, in S. Peter.

It were also not hard to shew, how all other phrases and circumlocutions, by which humane death is expressed, either in Holy Scripture, or in usual language, or among Philosophers, and more accurate speakers, are either expressly applied, or by consequence are plainly applicable to the death of our Saviour, such for instance as these in Scripture; ἀνάλυσις, being resolved into our principles, or the returning of them thither whence they came; ἀπόλυσις, a being freed, licenced, or dismissed hence; ἐκδημία ἐκ τοῦ σώματος, a going, or abode abroad; a peregrination, or absentment from the body; ἀνέκδοσις, putting off, or being divested of the body; ἀφανισμὸς, disappearance, or cessation in appearance to be; a going hence, and not being seen; a falling on sleep, resting from our labours, sleeping with our fathers,

1 Tim. 4. 6.
 Phil. 1. 23.
 Luke 2. 29.
 2 Cor. 5. 8.
 Acts 13. 36.

fathers, being added, and gathered to our fathers; being taken, or cut off out of the land of the living; going down into the pit; lying down, resting, sleeping in the dust; making our bed in darkness: these and the like phrases occurring in Scripture (which might be parallell'd out of vulgar speech, and out of learned discourses) describing either the entrance into, or the abiding in the state of that death, to which all men are obnoxious, might easily be shewed applicable to the death of our Saviour. His resurrection doth imply the reality of his death; for otherwise it had not been miraculous, it had not been a pledge of our resurrection. But I will not farther needlessly insist upon explicating, or confirming a point so clear, and never misunderstood, or question'd, except by some wild and presumptuous Hereticks.

Our Saviour's death then was a true, real and proper death, suitable to that frail, passible and mortal nature, which he vouchsafed to undergo for us; to the condition of *sinful flesh, in the likeness whereof he did appear*; severing his soul and body, and remitting them to their original sources; his passion was indeed *ultimum supplicium*, an extreme capital punishment, the highest in the last result, which in this world either the fiercest injustice, or the severest justice could inflict: for, *to kill the body* is (as our Lord himself taught) the utmost limit of all humane power and malice; the most and worst that man can do; they have not *μετὰ τὴν τῆς ψυχῆς*, any thing beyond that which they can attempt upon us; and so far did they proceed with our Lord. Such was the nature of his death; such indeed as was requisite for the accomplishment of the ends and effects designed thereby.

2. Let us now consider those peculiar adjuncts and respects of our Lord's death (together with his whole passion, whereof his death was the chief part, and final completion) the which do commend it to our regard, and amplify the worth thereof: such are, 1. Its being a result of God's eternal resolution and decree. 2. Its being a matter of free consent and compact between God the Father and his only Son. 3. Its being anciently prefigured and predicted. 4. Its being executed by God's hand and providence guiding and governing it; and by man's action concurring. 5. Its being the death of a person so holy and innocent, so high and excellent, of God's Son, of God the Son.

1. It was a result of God's eternal counsel and decree; it was no casual event, no expedient suddenly devised, or slip from providence, but a well-laid design, from all eternity contrived by divine wisdom, resolved upon by divine goodness. As God did (by the incomprehensible perfection of his nature) from thence foresee our lapse, and misery, so he did as soon determine our remedy and means of salvation. As the whole of that mysterious dispensation concerning Christ, so especially did this main part thereof proceed *κατὰ πρόθεσιν τοῦ πατρὸς αἰώνιον*, according to an eternal purpose (as S. Paul speaketh;) for our Saviour was a *Lamb slain* (in Eph. 3. 1. designation irrevocably slain) from the foundation of the world; as it is said in the Revelation: And, we (saith S. Peter) were redeemed by the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish, and without spot, *προεγνωσμένην μὲν*, fore-ordained indeed before the foundation of the world. And our Saviour went (as he telleth us himself) to suffer, *κατὰ τὸ προσκεταμένον*, according to what was determined; and, It was by the determinate counsel, and foreknowledge of God (saith S. Peter) that he was delivered up into those wicked hands that slew him; nor did the conspiracy of Herod and Pilate, with the nation and people of the Jews effect any thing about it, beyond *ὅσα ἢ χεῖρ, ἢ ἡ βουλὴ θεοῦ πρόβλεπον γινώσκοντες*, whatever the hand and counsel of God (or God's effectual purpose) had predetermined to come to pass. Such an especial care, and providence of God, concerning this matter, so expressly and so frequently recommended to our observation, do argue the very great moment and high worth thereof. What God declareth himself to have had so early, and earnest a care of, must be matter of highest consideration and importance.

2. It was a matter of free consent and compact between God and his Son. God did freely and graciously (out of merciful regard to our welfare) proffer, that if he would please to undertake to redeem his (lost and enslaved) creature an honourable and comfortable success to his enterprise; that he would accept his performances, and that the design should prosper in his hand; he did willingly embrace the proposal, and applyed himself to the performance: *When thou shalt make thy soul an offering for sin, thou shalt see thy seed, and prolong thy days,* and

Gen. 25. 8. 49. 33, &c. Psal. 39.
13. 52. 5. 28. 1. 143. 7. 88. 4. Jer.
11. 19. Isa. 38. 18. 26. 19. Ezek.
26. 20. Dan. 12. 12. Job 7. 21. 17.
16. 20. 11. 21. 26. 17. 13.

Rom. 8. 3.

Matt. 10. 28.
Luke 12. 4.

Eph. 3. 1.
Apoc. 13. 8.

1 Pet. 1. 19.

Luke 22. 22.

Acts 2. 23. 41.

28.

Isa. 53. 9, 10.

and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in thy hand ; thou shalt see of the travel of thy soul, and shalt be satisfied ; that, in the Prophet's language was God's proposition ; and, *Lo I come to do thy will O God* ; that was our Saviour's reply in correspondence and consent thereto. God, in consideration of what our Lord would obediently suffer, did (as our Saviour telleth us) *πατίσθαι βασιλείαν*, *covenant to him a kingdom* ; committing a sovereign authority, assigning an universal dominion to him ; in virtue of which transaction it was, that *Jesus for the suffering of death, was crowned with glory and honour* ; that, *because he poured out his soul unto death, God divided him a portion with the great* ; that, *he being obedient to the death, God exalted him, and gave him a name above all names*. In this regard are God's elect and faithful people said to be given unto him as a retribution to him, *who gave himself for them*, (*Thine they were*, saith our Lord to his Father, *and thou gavest them me* ;) hence are we said to be *bought with a price* ; hence is *the Church purchased by his blood* ; there was therefore a covenant and bargain driven between God and his Son concerning this affair ; and of huge consideration surely must that affair be, wherein such persons do so deeply interest themselves, trafficking, and (as it were) standing upon terms with one another.

3. That the great excellency and efficacy of our Saviour's death and passion might appear, it was by manifold Types foreshadowed, and in divers Prophecies foretold. Indeed most of the famous passages of providence (especially the signal afflictions of eminent persons representing our Saviour) do seem to have been prefigurations of, or preludes to his passion. The blood of the righteous Protomartyr *Abel*, shed by an envious brother, for acceptable obedience performed by him to God's will, and *crying to heaven*, might prefigure that blood, which cried also, although with another voice, *speaking better things than the blood of Abel* ; not sad complaints, and suits for vengeance, but sweet entreaties and intercessions for mercy. *Isaac*, the only Son, *the son of promise*, his oblation in purpose, or *death in parable*, as the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews* speaketh, did plainly represent our Saviour, the promised seed, his being really offered, and afterward miraculously restored to life. *Joseph* his being sold, and put into slavery by his envious brethren, being slanderously accused, and shut in prison (*whose feet they hurt with fetters, the iron entred into his soul*) and this by God's disposal, in order to his exaltation ; and that he might be a means of preserving life, and preparing a convenient habitation for the children of *Israel*, doth well resemble him, who by *suffering entred into his glory* ; who thereby being perfected, became the author of salvation to his brethren, all true *Israelites* ; who went to prepare mansions of rest and light, a heavenly *Goshen* for them. *David's* persecutions foregoing his royal dignity and prosperous state, which he expresseth in such strains as these ; *The sorrows of death compassed me, and the floods of ungodly men made me afraid ; the sorrows of hell compassed me about, and the snares of death prevented me* ; how they may adumbrate the more real extremities of our Lord's afflictions, previous to his glorious exaltation, I leave you to consider ; as also the rest of such passages having a mysterious importance accommodable to this purpose. However, all the sacrifices of old instituted by God, we may with fuller confidence affirm to have been chiefly preparatory unto, and prefigurative of this most true and perfect sacrifice ; by virtue whereof indeed those *συνεργήματα*, and *συναι*, umbratick representations (or insinuations) did obtain their substance, validity and effect : if they did not signifie this in design, they could signifie nothing in effect ; for as *without shedding of blood there was no remission* (God's anger would not be appeased, nor his justice satisfied without it ; it being *blood, which* according to God's prescription, *did make atonement for the soul*) as the appointment of those sacrifices did speak and signify ; so it was impossible that the blood of bulls, and goats, should take away sin ; that those legal gifts and sacrifices should perfect the conscience of him that did the service ; that is, should entirely assure him of pardon and impunity, or raise in him a strong and clear hope of God's favour : the lives of beasts were not in value answerable, nor could fitly be subrogated in stead of mens souls, which had offended, and thence were liable to death ; the effusion of their blood could not reasonably satisfy a man's conscience, sensible of guilt, and fearful of God's displeasure, that by it God was fully appeased ; they must therefore refer unto a *more excellent sacrifice* ; one more sufficient in it self, and more acceptable to God ; in virtue of which, and in regard thereto sin might be thoroughly

ly expiated, God's wrath might be propitiated, divine vengeance might be removed, the mind of man therefore might be comforted and contented. The High Priests entrance once a year into the Holy of Holies, *not without blood to atone for* Heb. 9. 7. 10. *his own and the peoples ignorances* (or miscarriages) did imply, that our *great High* 24. *Priest* should make one bloody atonement for the offences of mankind, and passing through the veil of mortal flesh, should enter into the true *Sanctum Sanctorum* of heaven, there to *appear in the presence of God for us*; exhibiting the virtue of his meritorious passion, together with his effectual intercession for mercy toward us. Especially the *Paschal Lamb*, in its substance (as a lamb, meek and gentle) in its quality (as without blemish and spot, pure and innocent) in its manner of preparation and dressing (being killed by all the assembly, having its blood sprinkled upon the doors of every house, being roasted with fire, having bitter herbs for its sauce) with other observable circumstances about it, was a most apt emblem of *Christ our Passover*: who not only by his death did signify, and 1 Cor. 5. 7. mind us of, but did really atchieve our deliverance from the mystical *Egypt*, our state of spiritual bondage. So did ancient types exhibit, and represent; plain predictions also did express the same death and suffering of our Lord: *Those things* (saith S. Peter) *which God before had shewed by the mouth of all his Prophets,* Acts 3. 18. *that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled*; not one Prophet only, not some few; but *all*, saith he, (that is, either plainly or covertly, either directly or by consequence) *have foreshewed* (or foretold) it: it is our negligence, or stupidity, if we do not discern it in them; as our Lord intimated, when he thus spake to his disciples; *O fools, and slow of heart, to believe all that the Prophets have spo-* Luke 24. 25, 26. 18. 31. *ken*; ought not Christ (ought he not according to their prefigurations, and predictions) *to have suffered these things, and so to enter into his glory*? That David, Acts 13. 27. 26. 22. an illustrious representative of the *Messias*, doth often describe as belonging to himself, mortal agonies and sufferings, not well applicable εἰς ἑαυτόν, or in direct Psal. 22. 109, &c. historical meaning to his own person, and therefore in reason, according to a more high and perfect sense, to be understood of the *Messias* himself; that *Daniel* plainly foretelleth, that in a certain time the *Messias* should be cut off: that *Isaias* doth in several places insinuate; and in the famous 53d Chapter of his Prophecy doth clearly describe the manner and kind of our Saviour's passion, is so evident, that even those of the *Jewish* Doctors, who have been most earnest opposers of our Lord, have been forced to acknowledge, that there is to be as well one *Messias* to suffer, as another to prosper, and reign in glory; being so gross as not to apprehend, or so perverse as not to acknowledge the consistency between antecedent suffering, and consequent glory; between a night of *darkness* and sorrow, and Luke 22. 53. a day of light and joy breaking out from it; not being able or willing to distinguish between an external pomp in this world, and an external majesty in the future state. But unto us God's so forward care, *by the spirit of Christ in his Prophets*, μεμαρτυρηται, to fore-witness (as S. Peter speaketh, or to testify before-hand) 1 Pet. 1. 11. *the sufferings of our Saviour, and the glories succeeding*, doth imply, with what diligence of attention we should regard; with what firmness of faith we should embrace, with what satisfaction of heart we should entertain this great and admirable dispensation.

4. We may consider, that this death was compassed by God's especial providence, directing and disposing it, although not without the active concurrence of men: the treacherous disposition, and covetous appetite of *Judas*; the envious humour, and blind zeal of the Scribes and Priests; the wanton fickleness, and wild rudeness of the people; the fearful and selfish temper of the Governour were but instruments, whereby God's own hand did inflict this sore chastisement upon his Son for us: It was *the Lord* that laid upon him the iniquities of us all, Acts 4. 28. *by God he was stricken, smitten and afflicted*: *Pilate*, 'tis said, *had no power to do* Ira. 53. 6, 4. *what he did, but what was given him from above*: The *Jews* with their Rulers John 19. 11. proceeded rashly and ignorantly; otherwise, as S. Paul affirmeth, *they would not* 1 Cor. 2. 8. *have crucified the Lord of glory*; but God advisedly, as S. Peter told them, *did* Acts 3. 17. 13. 27. *accomplish it*; He did not spare his own Son, but delivered him up for us: He as it were suspended his bowels of pity toward him, he withdrew his face of kindness from him, out of compassion and benignity toward us; he used him severely, that he might deal favourably with us. Rom. 8. 32.

Yet did man actively concur therein ; all mankind in a sort, by its representatives, was involved as principally in the guilt for which, so in the guilt by which he suffered ; there was a general conspiracy of Jew and Gentile practised against the life of their common Saviour. *Of a truth, saith S. Peter, against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, were gathered together both Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and with the people of Israel:* In the Jews the horrid ingratitude of men, in the Gentiles their wretched infirmity did appear ; the which, by their active efficacy toward our Lord's death, did signifie the meritorious influence they also had upon it ; that it was our iniquity and corruption which did cause it : so as a work of divine providence (the most admirable work ever accomplished by providence) as an act of humane pravity (the most heinous act ever committed by men) is the death of our Lord considerable.

5. But more immediately the quality and condition of our Saviour's person do most commend to us, and advance the worth of his death : If as the *Psal.* 116. 15. *precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints* ; if the spotless candour, and unblemished integrity of a Lamb do make its blood precious, and qualifie it for an acceptable sacrifice ; How valuable to God shall be the death of a person, so perfectly holy and innocent ; who did not so much as *know sin* ; in whose mouth no guile was ever found ; who was holy, harmless, undefiled, removed (at infinite distance removed) from sinners ? who needed not to offer sacrifices for his own sins ; whose death therefore for others were apt to be more available and acceptable. Again, If the life of a King be (as King David's people told him) *worth ten thousand lives* ; if it be a most enormous crime, and highest treason to imagine his death ; How valuable must be the death of a person, so incomparably transcendent in dignity ? of the Lord of glory, of the Prince of life ; *Ye denied the Holy and the Just one ; ye slew the Prince of life ; — They crucified the Lord of glory* ; so the Apostles do aggravate the business. But a farther height, a perfect immensity indeed, of worth and efficacy, must needs accrue to the death of our Saviour, from his being the son of God ; from his being God (One, and the same in nature with his Almighty, and All-glorious Father, for it is the blood of Christ, the son of God, which purgeth us, from all sin ; yea, God himself did as Saint Paul saith in the Acts) purchase the Church with his blood ; it is the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity : and, Hereby (saith S. John) perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us : That the immortal God should die, that the most High should be debased to so low a condition, as it cannot be heard without wonder, so it could not be undertaken without huge reason, nor accomplished without mighty effect : Well indeed might such a condescension serve to advance us from the basest state to any pitch of honour and happiness ; well might one drop of that Royal blood of heaven suffice to purchase many worlds, to ransom innumerable lives of men, to expiate an infinity of sins, however grievous and foul. But so much for the peculiar adjuncts, and respects of our Lord's death.

3. Let us now consider the causes, and principles, whence it proceeded ; which moved God to determine it, and our Lord to undertake it ; they were in both acts most voluntary and free : of the Father it is said, *It pleased the Lord to bruise him* ; and, *Behold* (saith our Lord in the Psalm) *I come to do thy will, O God* ; that is, as the Apostle to the Hebrews expoundeth it, to offer, not the blood of beasts in sacrifice, but my own body according to thy will and appointment ; And, *This commandment* (saith he in S. John) *I received of my Father, to lay down my life* ; and, *The Cup* (saith he again) *which my Father hath given me, Shall I not drink it ?* so on the Father's part, and on our Saviour's likewise it was no less voluntary ; for, *None* (saith he) *taketh my life from me* : (that is, It is not from any necessity or compulsion that I do part with it) *but I lay it down of my self* ; (with absolute choice and freedom) *I have power to lay it down, and I have power to resume it* ; and, *The bread*, saith he, *which I shall give, is my flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world* ; *The Son of man came to give his life a ransom for many* ; the yielding his flesh to death, the paying his life a ransom, were deeds of gift, perfectly free : and that both in regard to God the Father, and the Son, this performance was voluntary, S. Paul together thus expresseth ; *Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God, and our Father* ; so this death issued from the joint Wills of God, and his Son : But as she

the volitions of every intelligent and wise agent do always proceed from some principle inclining, or are directed according to some impulsive cause moving to them, so divers principles, and causes of these voluntary acts are declared in Scripture; the chief of which are reducible to these *two*; *one* internally disposing God's goodness; the *other* externally inviting man's distress: The case stood thus: Mankind lying in a sad and forlorn estate, oppressed by *Satan*, enslaved to sin, subject to a rigorous law, exposed to the severity of justice, tormented by the sense of guilt, fearful of divine wrath and due vengeance; in short, by the sentence of heaven, and by the suffrage of conscience within, condemned to punishment unavoidable, and to intollerable misery: Man, I say, lying in so desperately uncomfortable a condition, God's infinite goodness regarded his poor creature, his *bowels of compassion* yerned toward him, a desire of relieving sprang up in his will; thence ^{Διὰ τὴν ἐλεῶσιν} ^{χρῆμα ἐλεῶσιν} ^{Luke 1: 17.} was he moved to provide such a remedy, sutable and sufficient for his delivery; for the removing all those mischiefs, and curing all those distempers; the main source of all this wonderful performance (as of all other providential dispensations, and works *ad extra*) was that most excellent perfection of God; which, in regard to this matter, is sometime termed *χρησμός*, benignity or bounty; implying the great benefit and advantage we do thence receive; sometimes grace, or favour, signifying the pure freeness in dispensing it, without any design of profit to himself, or any desert on our part (*By the grace of God he tasted death for every man*) sometimes mercy, denoting our bad deserts, or obnoxiousness to justice and punishment; sometimes pity, signifying the great need we had thereof, by reason of our extreme distress and misery. Commonly also it is, by the most obliging and endearing name stiled love, and philanthropy, intimating the earnest regard and benevolence God had to us as his creatures, and as capable of being benefitted and bettered by him: *Herein* (saith S. Paul) *God commended his love toward us, in that we being yet sinners, Christ died for us.* And, God (saith S. John) *loved us, and sent his Son to be a propitiation for us; and, God (saith our Lord himself) so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son — that the world might be saved by him.*

By the way it is worth observing, that there is distinguishable a three-fold love of God toward men, intimated in Scripture. 1. A general love to mankind, antecedent to the sending our Lord, and his performances, being the ground of God's designing them; which may be called a love of pity, or mercy toward poor man lying under condemnation and distress; this is that *φίλανθρωπία τῆς σωτηρίας ἡμῶν διὰ*, *philanthropy of God our Saviour, which appeared in saving us* (that is in granting us the capacity and means of salvation) *not by works of righteousness, which we had done, but by his mercy; the love which he commended, in that while we were sinners, Christ dyed for us.* 2. A love, immediately consequent upon our Lord's performances and sufferings, and procured by them; whereby God is so far pleased with men, and reconciled to the world, that he *desireth all mens salvation*, and offereth to them terms and means thereof; in regard to which our Lord is said to be the Saviour of the World, and Redeemer of all men; of which love S. Paul speaketh, when he saith, that *being enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son*; and that *God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their sins*; and that *God having made peace by the blood of his cross, did reconcile by him all things unto himself, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven*; the which may be called a love of reconciliation and favour; or the grace of God which came by Jesus Christ.

3. A peculiar love of friendship, and complacence, which God beareth toward all those, who do sincerely turn, and stedfastly adhere to him, repenting of their sins, and embracing the Gospel; and persisting in obedience to his laws; such God is every where represented to affect with tenderest love, as his faithful servants, his good friends, and dear children; being *especially the Saviour of them*: this distinction is observable for our better understanding the passages of scripture concerning this matter; in which God is sometime represented as bearing a general love to all men, sometimes as more especially loving the faithful and good men.

The like principles and impulsive causes are said to move our Lord to undertake, and undergo death for us; it was goodness, and love toward us that inclined him thereto: *Christ* (saith S. Paul) *loved us, and delivered up himself for us an offering, and sacrifice to God. He loved the Church, and delivered up himself for it; He*

Apoc. 1. 5. *loved us, and washed us from our sins in his blood. Hereby we perceive the love of*
 1 John 3. 16. *God, because he laid down his life for us; I live (saith S. Paul again) by the faith*
 (Joh. 15. 13.) *of the Son of God, who loveth me, and gave himself for me.*

Such were the principles disposing, and causes in a sort moving; to which we
 1 Cor. 15. 3. may add our sins, as the meritorious causes of our Saviour's death: *He died for*
 Heb. 10. 12. *our sins; he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities.* He
 Isa. 53. 5, 6. *died for us, not only as for men, not only as for wretched men, but as for unjust*
 2 Cor. 5. 15. *and sinful men; as for enemies, and strangers to God; such as had grievously dis-*
 Rom. 5. 6, 8. *pleased God, had incurred heinous guilt, had deserved, and were become obnox-*
 1 Pet. 3. 16. *ious to severest punishment; so standing in need of reconciliation, propitiation and*
redemption. Had we been innocent and guiltless, there had wanted sufficient
cause, or just reason for his death; God would not have been angry, justice could
have had no pretence, or hold; we should not have been liable to suffer our selves,
 Rom. 6. 23. *nor could he have suffered for us. Death is the debt, or wages due to sin; which*
 Isa. 53. 6, 4. *he therefore payed, because we owed it, and could not discharge it; All we (as*
 11. *it is said in the Prophet) have gone astray, we have turned every one to his own way,*
 * 2 Cor. 5. 21. *and the Lord (therefore) hath laid on him the iniquity of us all: Our sins were not*
 1 Tim. 2. 6. *only indirect, or remote occasions of his death, but did procure it in way of de-*
 Matt. 20. 28. *sert: even as they would have been meritorious causes of our death had he not*
 1 Cor. 6. 20. *undertaken for us, so were they the like causes of his death, who died for us,*
 Heb. 9. 12. *and in our stead; who * was made sin (that is, a sinner, or a sacrifice) for us;*
 Gal. 3. 13. *who gave himself *ἀνταγρεν*, a ransom in stead of us all; paying his blood a price for*
 1 Pet. 1. 18. *us, and redeeming us thereby from all the penalties and inconveniences we were li-*
 Rom. 3. 24. *able to; buying us from the curse, by becoming a curse for us; who had upon him the*
 2 Pet. 2. 1. *chastisement of our peace; and did offer up his soul an offering,*
 Eph. 1. 7. *and sacrifice for our sins; thereby expiating them, propitiat-*
 Col. 1. 14. *ing God's wrath, and reconciling God unto us, purging us*
 Isa. 53. 5, 10. Heb. 10. 12. 1 John 2. 2. 4. 10. Rom. 3. 25. Heb. 2. 17. *from guilt, and procuring entire remission for our sins; the*
 Rom. 5. 10, 11. 2 Cor. 5. 19. Eph. 2. 16. 1. 7. Heb. 9. 14, 23, 26. John 3. 36. Matt. 26. 28. Col. 1. 14. 1 John 1. 7. Apoc. 1. 5. *which considerations do sufficiently argue our sins in way of*
desert, to have been the causes of his death.

Now for the ends which our Lord's death aimeth at, and the effects which it
 produceth (these we join, because in reality they are the same) they, in Scrip-
 ture-reckoning and expression, are various and many: the most general are these,
 comprehending divers others subordinate to them.

1. The illustration of God's glory, by demonstrating and displaying therein
 Rom. 3. 5. his most excellent attributes and perfections, so doth S. Paul teach us: *Whom*
 Col. 1. 27. *God (saith he) hath set forth a propitiation by faith in his blood, *ὡς ἵλασθαι τὴν ἀνομί-**
 Eph. 2. 7. *αν ἡμῶν, for a demonstration of his righteousness, that is, as I take it, of his good-*
 (Joh. 21. 20.) *ness, his justice, his fidelity, his constancy, of all those commendable perfections,*
 which are expressed in dealing with others; and our Lord, his passion being in-
 John 13. 31. *stantly to follow, made this reflection; Now is the Son of man glorified, and God*
 17. 4. *is glorified in him: and, I have glorified thee upon earth, I have finished the work*
which thou gavest me to do. God did therein shew himself most highly good and
 gracious, in so providing for the welfare of those who deserved nothing of him,
 who deserved ill of him, who had offended and injured him very heinously: he
 manifested himself most strictly just, in not suffering iniquity to go unpunished,
 but rather than so, exposing his own dear Son to punishment, and in him chusing
 himself to suffer; he declared his wisdom in contriving so admirable an expedi-
 ent, whereby both his goodness might be exercised, and his justice not infringed;
 he shewed his veracity, fidelity and constancy, in executing by his providence
 what he before had designed and promised, although so grievous and bitter to
 the Son of his love; he therein also laid a ground of declaring his All-mighty
 power, in raising him from the dead, as likewise of his goodness and justice in
 exalting him: thus by our Saviour's death was the divine glory much illustrated,
 and our good consequently promoted; for that we therein contemplating him so
 amiable for goodness, so terrible for justice, so venerable for all excellency, may
 be induced thence to love him, to dread him, to worship and reverence him, as it
 becometh us, and as it is necessary for us in order to our happiness.

2. The dignifying, and exaltation of our Lord himself; by acquiring unto
 him in a manner a new right unto, and enstating him in an universal dominion,
 in a transcendent glory, in perfect joy accruing to him by remuneration for so
 excel-

excellent an instance of submission, and obedience to God's will. This is that which our Lord foresaw, and foretold: *If God was glorified in him, then will God glorify him in himself; and shall straightway glorify him.* And, *To this end* (saith S. Paul) *Christ died, that he might be the Lord of the dead and living.* And, *For the suffering of death he was crowned with glory, and honour,* saith the Apostle to the Hebrews. And, *He was obedient to the death, therefore God exalted him;* and, *The Prince of our Salvation was perfected by suffering;* and, *For the joy that was set before him he endured the cross;* and, *He* (saith the Prophet of him) *shall see the travail of his soul, and be satisfied.* And, *Worthy* (say the heavenly host in the Apocalypse) *is the lamb that is slain* (worthy is he, for that he was slain, and did redeem us to God by his blood) *to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.*

3. The salvation of mankind; the which he was designed to procure by his death, and in many respects he did promote it thereby.

He did it by appeasing that wrath of God, which he naturally beareth toward iniquity; and reconciling God to men, who by sin were alienated from him; by procuring a favourable disposition, and intentions of grace toward us. *While we were sinners* (saith S. Paul) *Christ died for us* (and sinners or wicked men God cannot like or endure): *Thou art not,* saith the Psalmist, *a God that hast pleasure in wickedness, neither shall evil dwell with thee; the foolish shall not stand in thy sight; thou hatest all workers of iniquity:* and, *The wicked, and him that loveth violence, his soul hateth;* yet for us, being such, Christ died, removing thereby that just hatred and displeasure; as S. Paul presently after expresseth, and expoundeth it: *When, saith he, we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son;* and otherwhere, *God* (saith he) *was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them;* the non-imputation of our sins is expressed as a singular effect, an instance, an argument of his being in mind reconciled, and favourably disposed toward us: and again; *He died to reconcile both* (Jews and Gentiles) *unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby;* that is, God being thereby reconciled to all people, they became thence united together in the common relation of friends, and fellow-servants to God; becoming, as it there follows, *fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God* (or allyed unto him by spiritual relations.)

Again, It furthered our salvation, by purchasing the remission of our sins, and justification of our persons; our freedom from condemnation and punishment; our appearance as upright, and acceptable in God's sight; upon the conditions of faith and repentance propounded in the Gospel; in regard to which effects he is said thereby to redeem us from our sins, to bear them, to take them away, to expiate them, to cleanse, to purge, to sanctify us from them: *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? Who shall condemn them? It is Christ that died:* that is, Christ's death hath freed them from all liableness to guilt and condemnation. *Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the Law, being made a curse for us;* that is, he by undergoing an accursed kind of death hath purchased an indemnity and impunity for the transgressors of God's law: and, *Being justified by his blood, we shall be saved by him from wrath;* that is, from the effects of God's just displeasure, condemnation and punishment: and, *In whom* (saith S. Paul again clearly) *we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace:* and, *My blood* (saith our Lord) *is the blood of the New Testament, which was shed for many for the remission of sins:* and, *Christ* (saith the Apostle to the Hebrews) *was once offered to bear the sins of many* (or of the many, the multitude of men): *Now once in the end of the world hath he appeared, as a propitiator, for the abolition of sin by the sacrifice of himself:* and, *Behold* (saith S. John the Baptist) *the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world:* and, *The blood of Christ doth* (saith S. John) *cleanse us from all sin:* He loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood: He is a propitiation for our sins, and not for our sins only, but for the sins of the whole world: And, Jesus, that by his blood he might sanctify the people, did suffer out of the gate. He delivered himself up for the Church, that he might sanctify it — that he might present it to himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy, and without blemish.

Our Lord also by his death procured our salvation, as having thereby purchased for us means sufficient to free us from the power and dominion of sin, to purifie our hearts, and sanctifie our lives; for, *He gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purifie to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works*: And, *He gave himself for our sins, that he might redeem us from this present evil world*: And, *We were redeemed, not with corruptible things, with silver, or with gold; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish, and without spot, from our vain conversation, delivered from our fathers*: And, *He by his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we being dead to sin should live unto righteousness*. We are with him dead to sin; our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.

In subordination to, coincidence, or concurrence with the principal designs and effects, our Lord also died for the reparation of God's honour, which we by contempt of his authority, and violation of his law had impaired, but our Saviour by so signal an obedience thereto did repair; for the recovery of God's right, which was infringed by with-drawing so great and noble a part of his creation from its due allegiance and service; the which he recovered and restored to him; for the satisfaction to God's justice, provoked by so heinous impieties and iniquities; the which was abundantly performed by so infinitely valuable a compensation, and sacrifice offered thereto.

Also for ratification of the new Covenant between God and us; whence his blood is called, *the blood of the Covenant, the blood of the New Testament*.

For the pacifying and reconciling all things in heaven and earth; removing all causes of dissention and distance; inducing obligations to concord and charity.

For pulling out the sting, and removing the terrors of death; destroying (or defeating) him that had the power of death, and delivering them who through the fear of death are all their life-time subject to death.

For the suppressing, vanquishing, and triumphing over the powers of hell and darkness, the which he did, as S. Paul telleth us, achieve upon his cross: and by his death he telleth us, that the Prince of this world was condemned, and cast out.

For engaging us to the practice of all righteousness and obedience (especially to the most excellent, high and hard parts thereof, charity, humility, meekness, patience, self-denial, utmost constancy and perseverance) both from our obligation in regard to what he suffered for us, and in imitation of his example. For, *We should run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame*: And, *Christ having suffered for us in the flesh, we should (saith S. Peter) arm our selves with the same mind, — so as no longer to live the rest of our time in the flesh to the lust of men, but to the will of God*.

Lastly, for attestation unto, and confirmation of divine truth; sealing by his blood that heavenly doctrine which he taught, and witnessing before Pontius Pilate a good confession: he was the Prince of Martyrs; who, as he for this end (as he told Pilate) was born, and for this end came into the world, that he might bear witness to the truth, so he especially did accomplish that glorious design by his death; enduring the contradiction of sinners against himself, resisting unto blood in combating against sin; by his blood indeed all other witnesses of truth, did (as it is said in the Revelation) accomplish their warfare, and obtain victory: his blood purchased for them their resolution and strength; his promises supported them, his example did animate them, to the profession and maintenance of truth, in the greatest dangers, and most violent assaults.

Such ends did the death of our Lord regard, such fruits did grow from it, which the time permitteth us but thus cursorily to touch.

5. Now for the practical influences the consideration of this Point should have upon us, they are many and great; but we now can only name, or insinuate them.

1. It should beget in us the highest degrees of love and gratitude toward God, and toward our Saviour, in regard to this highest expression of love, and instance of beneficence toward us. Greater love God could not have shewed, than in thus destinating, and offering up his only dearest Son to death (a most painful and shameful

shameful death) for our sake ; and, Greater love (he told us himself) *than this hath no man*, than that one should lay down his life for his friends ; no man hath greater, except himself, who even laid his life down for his enemies and persecutors : And love so incomparably, so extreamly great, doth surely require correspondent degrees of love and thankfulness. John 15. 13. Rom. 5. 10.

2. It should raise in us great faith and hope in God, excluding all distrust and despair, that God will not bestow upon us whatever is needfully, or conveniently good for us ; for He, (as S. Paul argueth) *who did not spare his own son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things ?*

3. Particularly, it should comfort us, and satisfy our conscience in regard to the guilt of our sins, however contracted, supposing that we do heartily repent of them ; for *that there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit ; and, that Being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ ;* by virtue of his death we sincerely repenting are freed from all condemnation, we truly believing have a firm and sure peace with God : *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect ? Who is he that condemneth, seeing it is Christ that hath dyed ?* We are very blameably incredulous, if having such an assurance from God, and such an engagement upon him, we distrust his mercy. Rom. 8. 1. 5. 1. Rom. 8. 34.

4. It discovereth unto us the heinousness of our sins, and thence should breed in us a vehement detestation, together with a great dread of them ; a detestation of them, as having provoked God to such a pitch of displeasure, causing him to deal thus severely with his own beloved Son ; as having brought so heavy suffering upon a person so infinitely high in dignity, excellent in worth, kind and gracious to us ; a dread of them, as exposing us, if we do not avoid and forsake them, to the most grievous pains and miseries ; for, *if these things were done to a green tree, (if such punishments were inflicted upon one so innocent, so worthy, so little obnoxious to the fire of divine wrath and vengeance) What shall be done to the dry ?* that is, What will become of us, who are so guilty, so combustible by that fire, if we by presumptuous commission of sin, and impenitent continuance therein, do incense God against us ? Luke 23. 31.

5. It should work in us a kindly contrition and remorse for our sins, which were indeed the murderers of so good a friend, and loving a Saviour : others were but instruments, they were the principal authors of his death ; they most truly betrayed him, they accused him, they condemned him, they lifted him up to the accursed tree : they moved God, and enabled men to inflict this horrible punishment on him.

6. It should deter us from them, and engage us most carefully to avoid them, as those which in a sort do exact another death from him ; *crucifying him afresh* (as the Apostle to the Hebrews telleth us) *vilifying and defiling the precious blood of the covenant* (as he likewise teacheth). Heb. 6. 9. 10. 29.

7. It should engage us to a patient submission and resignation of our selves to the will and providence of God ; *forasmuch as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, we should (as S. Peter adviseth) arm our selves likewise with the same mind ;* and, *Let (exhorteth S. Paul) the same mind be in us that was in Christ Jesus ; who being in the form of God humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross :* We should not disdain, nor upon any account be displeased, or unwilling in bearing any cross, or affliction, to follow the pattern of our great Master ; *looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross.* Heb. 12. 1.

8. It doth also oblige us to the deepest mortification in conformity to his death : we should be *with him* (or after him) *crucified* to the lusts and affections of the flesh, to the fashions, glories, desires and delights of the world ; *knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him ; that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.* Phil. 3. 20. Gal. 5. 24. Gal. 2. 20. 1 Pet. 4. 2. Col. 3. 3, 5. Rom. 6. 5, 6.

9. It is also a strong engagement to the fullest measure of charity toward our brethren ; for, *If (saith S. John) God so loved us (as to give his own Son to die for us) then ought we to love one another, in a degree answerable to such an obligation and pattern : If (added the same Apostle) he laid down his life for us, then ought we also to lay down our lives for the brethren.* 1 John 4. 11. 3. 16.

10. In fine, we hence appear obliged to yield up our selves wholly to the service of our Saviour ; to the promoting of his interest and glory : *Since, we (as 1 Cor. 6. 20. S. Paul admonisheth us) are not our own, being bought with a price ; and must therefore glorifie God in our body, and in our spirit, which are God's, by a purchase so dear and precious ; since, as that Apostle again mindeth us, Christ died for all, that they which live might not live to themselves, but to him that died for them ; this being, let us not wrong the Lord who bought us, by with-holding his due, the price of his dearest blood ; let us not abuse him, by defeating his purpose, no less advantageous to our selves, than honourable to him ; but as by being our Saviour, he hath deserved to be our Lord, so in effect let him ever be ; let us ever believe him so in our heart, confess him with our mouth, and avow him in our practice ; which that we may do, God of his infinite mercy, by his holy grace, vouchsafe unto us, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

Apoc. 1. 5. *Now, Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us Kings and Priests unto God ; and his Father, to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever.*

Apoc. 5. 12. *Worthy is the lamb, that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.*

Apoc. 5. 13. *Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power be unto him, that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. Amen.*

He descended into Hell.

S E R M O N XXVIII.

ACTS. II. 27.

Because thou wilt not leave my soul in Hell.



Aint Peter in his Sermon to the Jews, cites these words of the Psalmist to prove the Resurrection of Christ. And because upon these words our Saviour's descent into Hell seem to be grounded, I shall from this Text take occasion to discourse of this Article of the Creed, *Καθάρων ἡς ᾗδε, He descended into hell.*

This Article is of later standing in the Creed, and doth not appear to have had place in any of the most ancient ones publick or private ; excepting that of *Aquileia* ; into which also perhaps it might have been inserted not long before *Ruffinus* his time ; and the meaning thereof hath always (both in more ancient times among the *Fathers*, and afterwards among the *Schoolmen*, and lately among *modern Divines*) been much debated, having yielded occasion to many prolix and elaborate discourses : To recite the several opinions about it, or different explications thereof, with the reasons produced to maintain or disprove them, were a matter of greater time and pains than I can well afford ; and to decide the controversies about it, a matter of greater difficulty than I could hope to achieve. Wherefore (both upon these accounts, and because I rather chuse to insist upon matters more clear in their nature, and more practical in consequence) I should be willing altogether to wave this obscure and perplexed subject ; yet however somewhat to comply with expectation, I shall touch briefly upon some things seeming conducive to the clearing, or to the ending of the controversies about it.

Now

Now where's there may be a threefold inquiry ; *one* concerning the meaning of these words (*He descended into hell*) intended by those who inserted them ; *another* concerning the most proper signification of the words themselves ; a *third* concerning the meaning, they are in consistency with truth capable of ;

1. The *first* I resolve, or rather remove, by saying, it seems needless to dispute, what meaning they, who placed the words here, did intend ; since, 1. It is possible, and by many like instances might be declared so, and perhaps not unlikely, that they might both themselves upon probable grounds believe, and for plausible ends propound to the belief of others this proposition, without apprehending any distinct sense thereof ; as we believe all the Scriptures, and commend them to the faith of others, without understanding the sense of many passages therein : And since, 2. Perhaps they might by them intend some notion not certain, or not true, following some conceits then passable among divers, but not built upon any sure foundation (like that of the *millennium* ; and the necessity of infants communicating, &c. which were anciently in great vogue, but are now discarded) and since, 3. To speak roundly, their bare authority, whoever they were (for that doth not appear) could not be such, as to oblige us to be of their minds, whatever they did mean or intend ; they perhaps were such, to whom we might owe much reverence, but should not be obliged to yield entire credence to their opinions. But farther, 4. Were I bound to speak my sense, I should say, that, supposing they had any distinct meaning, they did intend to affirm, that our Saviour's soul, did by a true and proper kind of motion descend into the regions infernal, or beneath the earth ; where they conceived the souls of men were detained ; for this appears to have been the more general and current opinion of those times, which it is probable they did comply with herein, whencesoever fetched, however grounded.

2. As to the *second* inquiry, concerning the signification of the words, what may be meant by *He descended* ; whether our Saviour himself, according to his humanity, or his soul, or his body, called *He* by *Synecdoche* ; what by *descended*, whether (to omit that sense, which makes the whole sentence an allegory, denoting the sufferance of infernal or hellish pains and sorrows, as too wide from the purpose ; whether, I say) by *descending* may be signified a proper local motion toward such a term, or an action so called in respect to some such motion accompanying it ; or a virtual motion by power and efficacy in places below : what by *Hell*, whether a state of being, or a place ; if a place, whether that where bodies are reposed, or that to which souls do go ; and if a place of souls, whether the place of good and happy souls, or that of bad and miserable ones ; or indifferently, and in common of both those ; for such a manifold ambiguity these words have, or are made to have ; and each of these senses are embraced, and contended for : I shall not examine any of them, nor farther meddle in the matter, than by saying,

1. That the *Hebrew* word *Sheol* (upon the true notion of which the sense of the word *Hell* (or *Hades*) in this place is conceived to depend) doth seem originally, most properly, and most frequently (perhaps constantly, except when it is translated, as all words sometimes are, to a figurative use) to design the whole Region protended downward from the surface of the earth to a depth (according to the vulgar opinion, as it seems anciently over the world) indefinite and unconceivable ; vastly capacious in extension, very darksome, desolate, and dungeon-like in quality (whence it is also frequently stiled the *pit*, (a) the *lowest pit*, (b) the *abyss*, (c) the *depths of the earth*, (d) the *darkness*, * the *depths of hell*.) I need not labour much to confirm the truth of this notion, since it is obvious, that this *Sheol* (when most absolutely and properly taken, the circumstances of discourse about it implying so much) is commonly opposed to *heaven*, not only in situation, but in dimension and distance ; as when *Job* speaking of the unsearchableness of the divine perfections, saith ; *It is as high as heaven, what canst thou do ; deeper than hell, what canst thou know ?* And the Prophet *Amos* ; *Though they dig into hell, thence shall mine hand take them ; though they climb into heaven, thence will I bring them down.*

Nobis inferi — in foffo terra & in
altro vafitar, & in ipfis visceribus ejus
abstrusa profunditas. Tert. de An. 55.
Απὸ λεία. Prov. 13. 11.
Διαφθόρα. Prov. 27. 20.

(a) } Ifa. 38. 18.
Pfal. 88. 6. Ecclef. 21. 11.
(b) Pfal. 71. 20. John 2. 6. Rom.
10. 7.
(c) Pfal. 71. 20.
(d) Job 17. 13. Pfal. 143. 3. Eccle.
6. 4. 1 Sam. 2. 9.
* Prov. 9. 18.

Job. 11. 8.
Amos 9. 2.
(Pfal. 139.)
(Deut. 32. 22.)
I Ifa. 57. 90

2. I say farther, because the bodies (or visible remainders) of persons dying do naturally fall down, or are put into the bosom of this pit, which is therefore an universal grave, and receptacle of them, therefore to dye is frequently termed *καταβαίνω εις ᾄδου*, or *καταβύθου εις ᾄδου*, to descend, or to be brought down into this hell; which happening to all men without exception (for, as the Psalmist says, *there is no man that shall deliver his soul* (or his life, or himself) *from the hand of this all-grasping hell*) therefore it is attributed promiscuously to all men, good and bad alike; I will go down, saith good Jacob, *unto the grave, unto my son mourning* (Gen. 37. 35. *καταβύθου εις ᾄδου*, I will go down to Sheol, this common grave of mankind) and 44. 29, 31. so frequently of others. Whence this Hell is apt figuratively to be put for, and Acts 2. 24. to signify equivalently with death it self; and it is once by the LXX. so translated (and S. Peter seems to use the phrase * after them) for death, I say, or for the law, condition and state of death: as in that of Hezekiah in the Prophet Esay, * *Sheol cannot praise thee; death cannot celebrate thee; they that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth*: where *οὐκ ᾄδου*, and *οὐ καταβύθου* (as the Greek renders Death and Hades are frequently joined as synonymous. The living, the living he shall praise thee.

3. I say farther, that this word, according to ancient use, seems not to signify the place, whither mens souls do go, or where they abide; for that (Ecclus. 48. 5. Macc. 6. 23, &c.) 1. It can hardly be made appear, that the ancient Hebrews either had any name appropriated to the place of souls, or did conceive distinctly, which way they did go; otherwise than that, as the Preacher speaks, *they returned unto God who gave them*; and that they did abide in God's hand; especially the souls of the just, according to that in the Book of Wisdom: *The souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and there shall no torment touch them*. And for that,

2. It seems, they did rather conceive the souls of men, when they died, to go upward than downward, as the Preacher again intimates, when he differenceth the spirit of man dying from the soul of beasts; *the soul of beasts descending with its body to the earth; the spirit of man ascending unto God*, to be disposed by him according to his pleasure and justice. And by Enos his being taken to God (whose special residence is expressed to be in heaven above) and by Elias his translation up into heaven (as it is in the Text of the history) 'tis probable, they did rather suppose the souls of the righteous to ascend, than to be conveyed downward into subterraneous caverns; those *πομῆς ᾄδου* (closets of hell) as the Book of Wisdom calls them; that *βύθου ᾄδου*, (deep pit of hell) as it is in Ben-Sirach; to ascend, I say, whether into the supreme heaven, or no, is not material; but some whither above, nearer unto God's most special residence, into a happy place.

3. I add, that if those ancients had by Sheol meant the receptacle or mansion of souls, it is not likely they would have used such expressions as those: *The grave (Sheol) cannot praise thee, death cannot celebrate thee; they that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth*; so Hezekiah spake; *In death there is no remembrance of thee, in SHEOL who shall give thee thanks*. So David said; and, *There is no works, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in SHEOL, whither thou goest*; so the Preacher; who hardly it seems could say so, if by Sheol he meant the place of souls; except he should also mean, that souls after death became deprived of all life and sense. The son of Sirach likewise speaks in the same manner: *Who shall praise the most High in hell, in stead of them which live and give thanks? Thanksgiving perisheth from the dead, as from one that is not; the living and sound in heart shall praise the Lord*.

I must confess, that afterwards (even before our Saviour's time) the word *ᾄδου* was assumed by the Jews, to design (as it did among the Greeks) either the place of souls in common, or more strictly the place of souls condemned to punishment and pain, for their bad lives here: Josephus doth often use the word in the first of these senses; and in the New Testament it seems peculiarly applied to the latter; as in the parable of the rich man, who being *in ᾄδου*, in hell and torments, did thence lift up his eyes, and behold afar off Lazarus in Abraham's bosom; but we cannot hence infer the same concerning the ancient meaning of the word Sheol; especially considering how the Jews, after the prophetic days, in their dispersions becoming acquainted with the world, did borrow some notions and expressions from elsewhere; which expressions our Saviour and his Apostles might well retain, when they were suitable and accommodable unto truth.

3. But however it be determined concerning the proper sense in general of this principal word in the Proposition, and of the rest depending thereon, as to their signification here ; I do thus, as to the present case, and the last main question propounded about the meaning, whereof the words are capable with truth, answer briefly.

1. If we do interpret the *descent into hell* here affirmed of our Saviour's interment, or being laid in the bosom of that universal grave we before spake of ; or, if (in a notion little differing from that) we take these words for a phrase (taking its ground thence in the manner fore-mentioned) importing no otherwise than when it was spoken of *Jacob* and others, that our Saviour did really pass into the state of death ; we are sure therein not to err ; the Proposition so understood being most certainly true : we shall also hereby be able fairly to satisfy the first, and best (if not the only) reason of this Proposition being commended to our belief. For that place in the *Acts* which seems to have been the occasion, and the main ground of this Proposition being asserted in these terms, doth not refuse, but commodiously admits this interpretation : for, our Saviour's *soul not being left in Hell, and not seeing corruption*, is plainly by *S. Peter* himself interpreted of his resurrection : *David* (saith he) *foreseeing this, spake of Christ's Resurrection* ; and, *Acts 2. 31.* in like manner, by *S. Paul* ; *As concerning, that he raised him from the dead, now no more to see corruption*, he said in this wise——— that speech, I say, *Our Saviour's soul not being left in Hell, and, not seeing corruption*, is by the Apostles interpreted to denote our Saviour's resurrection ; that is, his being freed from the bands of death, and raised from the grave, before his flesh had underwent corruption ; and it is opposed unto *David's* continuing in death, and seeing corruption ; his body being corrupted and consumed in the grave ; the *Apostles* not designing to assert or prove more, than our Lord's Resurrection : *David*, argue they, fell on sleep, and hath continued till now in that state ; *David* remained unto this day in the grave, and so his body being reduced to dust saw corruption ; *ἐν τῷ μυσταγωγίῳ* ; he dyed, and was buried, without any reversion ; therefore that speech of his in the *Psalms* must not fully and ultimately be understood of him, to whom they did not so exactly agree ; but of such an one, who did not abide in that deadly sleep ; whose flesh, being opportunely raised, did avoid the sight (or undergoing) of corruption. And whereas it is said, *τὴν ψυχὴν μου*, my soul, or my life ; nothing can be thence drawn greatly prejudicial to this exposition ; for (to omit that bolder exposition of *Beza*, who sometime did by the soul understand the dead body, translating the words, *Non derelinques cadaver meum in sepulchro*) nothing is more usual than both for the flesh, and for the soul, (each of them *Synecdochically*) to signify the person, considered as sometime endued with life : *Exod. 31. 14.* *Every one that sinneth shall be put to death* ; and, *that soul shall be cut off*, *Levit. 7. 25.* *are terms equivalent in the Law* : the soul that eateth, the soul that toucheth, and the like phrases do often occur ; and those expressions, *to deliver their soul from death* ; *God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave* ; *What man is he that shall not see death, that shall deliver his soul from the hand of the grave ?* *Psal. 33. 19.* *do seem parallel to this, Thou shalt not leave my soul in hell* ; which yet do import no more, than the persons there spoken of respectively to be preserved from death. *49. 15. 89. 48.*

Again, taking *soul* for the living soul, or that faculty by which we live, and hell for the state of death, the words mentioned, *Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell*, will have this natural exposition ; agreeable to the *Apostles* design : thou wilt not suffer me to continue deprived of life, till my flesh be corrupted. It is also observable, that *S. Paul* in the 13th of the *Acts*, neglecting the former part, *Thou shalt not leave my soul in Hell*, contents himself with the latter, *Thou wilt not yield thy Holy one to see corruption*, intimating both parts to signify the same thing. *(Dr. H. Pr. C.)*

If it be objected as an inconvenience to this explication of the words here in the *Creed*, that admitting it, they signify no more, than what was before expressed in plain words, *Dead and buried* ; and so contain only a needless repetition : I Answer,

1. That this objection concerns them, who inserted the words here ; who yet, even supposing this exposition to be good, might be excusable, as suspecting it possible, that our Saviour being *in Hell*, according to *S. Peter*, might imply more than this, although they knew not what distinctly ; who also might perhaps intend

tend somewhat by these words different from this sense, but not so truly applicable to them, or agreeable to the truth of the thing; I answer,

2. That to say our Saviour did continue in the state of death for some time, doth add somewhat above his being dead and buried; wherefore thus understanding the *descent* doth not render it altogether superfluous.

3. That a greater inconvenience seems to arise from expounding them otherwise; the doing so, reflecting upon the more ancient compliers, both of this, and other *Breviaries* of faith, as the *Nicene*, and *Constantinopolitan* Councils, *Irenaeus*, *Tertullian*, &c. who left them out; which they should not have done, if they contain any thing highly material and different from what is here otherwise expressed; whose credit is (as I conceive) more to be tendred, than of their *Juniors* and followers unknown to us; and so much the more, for that in a matter of this kind, defect or omission is less tolerable, than any redundancy in expression.

1 Cor. 15. 4. Which inconvenience may seem in a manner to reach higher, even to S. Paul himself; who in the 15th Chapter of his first Epistle to the *Corinthians*, declaring the sum of what he both learned and taught concerning our Saviour's last grand performances, only mentions his death, burial and resurrection; *I delivered unto you first, that Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures, and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day*; which enumeration of his, we may, it seems, well acquiesce in, as sufficient and compleat, and may thence with great probability infer, that no other *descent* of our Saviour into hell, beside his death and burial, was by him understood, or delivered in his *Catechetical* discourses and preachings as a point of faith; so that what is objected as an inconvenience, proves no small advantage to this exposition. But I say farther, to the main question, that,

1. Interpreting *Hell* for the mansion, or habitation of souls departed hence (to omit, that *Sheol*, as I before noted, seems to signify otherwise in the *Old Testament*, and consequently thence the place in the *A&S* applyed out of the *Psalms*, would not be proper to this purpose; whereby the main

Εἰς ὃ πάλιν διότι καὶ εἰς τὸ
χέρον ἐκείνου τὰς ψυχὰς μετατίνα-
ται. Gr. Nyl. de im. an.
Μετατίναται εἰς τὸ αἶθερ καὶ ἀπα-
νέσ. Id.

ground and support of the assertion it self, taken according to this sense, were removed; waving I say, that consideration, and taking *Adm.* according to the meaning, which we must confess it sometime to bear in the *New Testament*, yet) there seems to follow some inconvenience thereon. For then

we must either take it for the place of damned spirits shut up in torment or despair (according to which acception the proposition it self would be most certainly uncertain, having no solid ground for it; and most probably false, for that it is affirmed, our Saviour's soul, the same day he died, did go into paradise; *This*

Luke 23. 43. day, said he to the penitent thief, *shalt thou be with me in paradise*) or we must take it for a place common to all souls, as well good and blessed; as bad and miserable; (for that it in the *New Testament* at least, comprehends the place of torment, is evident by the parable of the *rich man* and *Lazarus*.) But I think that S. *Austin* had reason to doubt, whether it were consonant to the style of the *New Testament*, that *Hades*, relating to the state of souls, should there be ever taken in a good or middle sense, at least, whereas 'tis said in the *Revelation*, that those two inseparable companions, *Death* and *Hades* (that *Hades*, which is said to render up its dead to judgment) were cast into the lake of fire, 'tis hard to suppose, that *Paradise* was cast in there; yea hard it were to say, that *Hades* was cast in thither, supposing that word did then in its usual latitude of signification (as Christians understood it) comprehend *paradise*. Yea farther, this explication forces us upon this inconvenience, that we must suppose paradise to be seated in a place be-

* 2 Cor. 12.
Οὐτε γὰρ ἐν ὑποχθονίοις ἀπο πρὸς
τὸν παραδεισόν, ὅτε ἐν παραδείσῳ τὰ
ὑποχθονία, &c. Græg. Nyl. T. 2. de
Resur. 1. Tertull. Apol. 47.

neath us, or within the earth; that paradise, which is either the same with the third (or highest) heavens in * S. Paul, or confining thereto: it is, I say, hard to be forced by an interpretation of these words, to consent, that paradise (that *locus divine amœnitatis recipiendæ Sanctorum Spiritibus destinatus*; the place of divine comfort and amenity, destined to receive the spirits of the Saints) should have its place in the darksome bowels of the earth; no commodious situation it seems for a garden, for delightful walks and bowers; yet so it must be seated, that our Saviour's soul may (at least in rigour and propriety of speech) be said to descend thereinto. The word *descend* taking

hell for the ancient *Sheol*, is proper enough, and hath ground both in authentick use, and the nature of the thing; but taking *hell* in this sense (for the place of souls) it is most probably improper, and hath no certain ground, or authority to commend it; for it is said, that our Saviour's soul was in Hell, not that it descended thither; nor can it by consequence be inferred so to have done, according to this meaning of *hell*. However,

3. I add, that seeing it is a most certain truth, that our Saviour's soul did immediately go into the place appointed to receive happy souls after their recession from the body, and resignation into God's hands; if we take *Hell* in a general and common sense for the place or state of souls departed; and descending for passing thereinto (by a falling as it were from life, or by going away together with the descent of the body; and thence styled descending; what appeareth visibly happening to the body, being accommodated to the soul) if I say, we do thus interpret our Saviour's *descent into Hell* for his soul's going into the common receptacle and mansion of souls, we shall so doing be sure not substantially to mistake. And this sense, I conceive, if the words can handsomely bear them, would be very proper to this place, as signifying somewhat distinct from what is otherwise expressed; and serving to the farther establishment of those great *Articles* adjoining, our Lord's *death* and *resurrection*; it implying the perfect accomplishment of death for the soul to have deserted the body, and to have been translated into that *invisible region* (as the Book of *Wisdom* calls it) that *invisible region*, so far distant hence, whence—*revocare gradum superasque evadere ad auras*, is a labour indeed, and a work not to be effected, but by the power of him, whose prerogative it is, *to kill, and make alive, to bring down to hell, and to bring up; to lead unto the gates of hell, and to bring back again.*

This is all that I shall say about this intricate point; for I cannot well be at the pain to consider, or examine those conceits, which pretend to acquaint us why, and to what effect our Saviour descended into Hell.

That our Lord went thither to preach unto, convert and redeem from thence all, or some of the damned Souls (for some say, that he depopulated and emptied that region of darkness; others are not so liberal as to free all thence, but only the fitter objects of compassion and favour; both saying that, which hath very weak, or no reasons to maintain, very strong and plain objections to assail it.) That he went to rescue, and conduct into glory the souls of the *Patriarchs*, and other good persons, from that infernal *Limbus*, in which till then they were detained; (a place by no likely means to be proved existent elsewhere than in the fancy of its inventors) or, That he went to deliver the souls of the just, and Prophets, from the wicked powers, into whose power they had fallen (as *J. Mar-tyr* in his *Dialogue with Tryphon*. p. 105.)

That he went to affront, triumph over, and terrify the powers of darkness upon their own ground, or in their own dominions.

These, and the like conceits seem enough discountenanced, by saying, the Scriptures no where plainly declare any such thing, and that therefore they have no good ground to stand upon (they pretend only one or two difficult and obscure places in the *first Epistle* of *S. Peter*, which are capable of fair expositions not favourable to them) whereas in teaching us, that our Lord preached upon earth salvation to them, who in this life should be converted to believe upon him and obey his laws; damnation irrecoverable to them, who should persist in infidelity and disobedience: that he merited by his obedience, and purchased by his blood, both a redemption from all future distress, and a translation into bliss; that he by his death vanquished all the powers of hell, and triumphed over them upon the cross; in these things the Scripture is very clear and copious: but concerning that redemption of souls beneath, that translation of souls out of subterraneous closets, or * prisons (as they call them) that local triumph in the Devil's kingdom, it is quite silent, or very dark in expression about them; whence we may well be somewhat backward in yielding assent to such devices, of which, if any perhaps should be true, yet could not the belief thereof be of necessity, or great importance to us: for what our Saviour so did below would not belong to the salvation of the living, which is abundantly provided for by his death and resurrection, with what followed them; nor would it much refer to our practice, which is otherwise sufficiently directed and encouraged. So that we may however safely be ignorant

*Vid. Fidei Symbola in Codice Justinian.
Tit. 1. De Gen. ad lit. 8. 5.*

Calv. Inst. 3. 25. 6.

in regard to any of those notions. But let it suffice to have discoursed thus far about this endless question; except we will end it with that saying of *S. Austin*; *Molius est dubitare de occultis, quam litigare de incertis*: or with that more peremptory saying of *Calvin*: *Atqui stultum, & temerarium est de rebus incognitis altius inquirere, quam Deus nobis scire permittit.*

He rose again from the Dead.

S E R M O N XXIX.

A C T S I. 3.

To whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs; being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.



THE most proper, and most usual way of God, in confirming any truth of high moment in special manner revealed by him, is by lending unto them, whom he employs as messengers thereof, his powerful arm for the performance of works supernatural or miraculous. Of such works there is none more certainly such than raising a dead person to life; the doing which upon several accounts plainly surpasseth the power of any creature; not only as exceeding the ordinary law and course of nature established and upheld by God, but for that the Souls of men departing hence do return into God's hand, or into a state by high sentence determined, whence no creature is able to fetch them down, or raise them up; because also God hath reserved the Prerogative of doing this unto himself; *he holding* (as it is expressed in the *Revelation*) *the keys of hell, and of death*; he having said, *I am he, and there is no God beside me; I kill, and I make alive.*

*Apoc. 1. 18.
Deut. 32. 39.
1 Sam. 2. 6.
Psalm. 68. 20.*

*2 Cor. 1. 22.
John 4. 48.*

There could also particularly be no more proper way of confirming our Religion to come from God, whether we consider the persons whom it was designed for, or the doctrines it propounded: The *Jews* were incapable of conviction by any other way, than by miracle; no other reason would have been apprehended by them, or would have had any force upon them: *The Jews* (saith *S. Paul*) *require a sign*; and *Except ye see signs and wonders ye will not believe*, said our *Saviour* to them. The *Gentiles* also had been so used to the winding off and on the subtilties and the plausibilities of disputation, that nothing probably in that kind would have sufficed to persuade them; and therefore somewhat miraculous in the highest kind might be needful to convert them: Also the most peculiar and eminent doctrines of our Religion (such as are, *Our Lord Jesus being the Messiah, the Son of God and Saviour of the World, the future resurrection, general Judgment, and dispensation of rewards, answerable to mens practice in this life*) cannot more immediately and directly be assured, than by the resurrection from the dead of him, who principally did reveal them.

Wherefore Almighty God in confirmation of our Religion did perform this great work in raising *Jesus* our Lord from the dead; and withal (for the conviction of the world, for rendring our faith reasonable, and our infidelity inexcusable) he did take especial care, that the fact should by very sufficient testimony be conveyed unto

unto us; to which purpose he did (as S. Peter said) *προϋποκαταρτίσας*, predesign, pick out, and appoint a competent number of persons, in all respects capable and fit to assert it; this is that which S. Luke in our Text doth in way of Historical narration affirm. And because the truth thereof is in its kind the principal argument, whereby the truth of our Religion in gross may be evinced, we shall for the confirmation of our Faith against all impressions of this incredulous (and therefore impious) age, endeavour by God's assistance now to declare, and maintain it. That *Jesus* truly died, all the world could testify; no death was ever more solemn or remarkable; nor do any adversaries contest it; that he after that death was by Divine power raised again to life is that which we believe and assert: Now whoever with reason shall doubt thereof or deny it, must do it, either because of some repugnance in the fact it self, implying that it could not well be done; or from deficiency of the testimony proving it, as to its authors, or circumstances: but neither of these exceptions may reasonably be admitted.

As for the fact it self, or the notion of a resurrection in general there cannot (admitting that, which as capable of antecedaneous proof, and as acknowledged by all persons owning any Religion, may be presupposed, the power and providence of God together with his chief Attributes of wisdom and goodness incomprehensible) there cannot be any repugnance therein, or any incredibility. For it was neither in its nature impossible to God, or in its design worthy of him; it contained nothing apparently either beyond the power of God, or presumable to be against his will.

1. To raise a dead man to life, is indeed we confess and avow a work surpassing the power of any creature, not assisted by God; but no reason can be assigned why it should go beyond the Divine power. The doing it doth not involve contradiction, and is therefore an object of power, and at least is achievable by Omnipotence: let the Soul be what it will, and in whatever life may be supposed to consist, nothing can hinder that God may reduce the parts of a man into the same state they sometime before were in. And very easily it is conceiveable that He, who (according to the general notions, and current traditions of mankind) did first inspire the Soul of man into his body, may reinfuse it being separated; that he who after death keepeth it in his hand, may thence restore it: who also (according to histories received in all the principal Religions that have been in the world) hath often actually performed it. *Pliny* indeed doth reckon this among instances of things absolutely impossible: *It is a faith*

*he, a great solace of our imperfect nature, that even God can not do all things; for neither can he bring death upon himself, if he would, nor bestow eternity on mortals, nor recall the dead to life: but 'tis no wonder, that he, who thought the Soul quite to perish by death, should conceive the restitution thereof impossible; although even supposing that, his opinion was not reasonable; for even any thing how corruptible soever by dissolution of its ingredients, or alteration of its temperament, may by recollecting and re-joining those ingredients, or by re-establishing the causes of such a temperament be restored (as a house whose materials are dispersed may be re-edified, or as a liquor by a new fermentation may be revived) which to effect may not be deemed hard to him, that made the whole world: however to such as him we may say as our Saviour did to the Sadducees; *yea err not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God.* Especially to those who acknowledge the immortality of the Soul, or its permanence in a separate state, and who admit the truth of the ancient histories among the Jews; it is not only most evidently possible, but very credible that God upon any considerable occasion should perform it; with such S. Paul might well thus expostulate; *What doth it seem incredible to you that God should raise the dead?* to you that have such previous notions and persuasions about God's omnipotency; (such as the Prophet *Jeremy* expresth when he saith, *Ab Lord God, behold, thou hast made the heaven, and the earth by thy great power, and stretched out arm, and there is nothing too hard for thee)* to you who avow God to be the Father of Spirits, who formeth the spirit of man within him, and that when man dieth, his Spirit returneth to God who gave it, to you who believe that our Souls are spiritual substances, like unto Angels subsisting after death, and destin'd to future rewards; to you in fine, who may in your Holy records find so many experi-*

Imperfecta vero in homine natura praecipua solacia sunt, ne Deum quidem posse omnia; nam neque sibi potest mortem con-jiscere si velit (quod homini dedit opti-mum in ceteris vita mala) nec mortales aeternitate donare, nec revocare defunctos.
Plin. lib. 7.

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Jer. 32. 17.
Matt. 22. 29.

Acts 26. 8.

Jer. 32. 17.
Zech. 8. 6.
Job 42. 2.
Heb. 12. 9.
Num. 16. 22.
27. 16.
Zech. 12. 1.
Ila. 57. 16.
Eccles. 12. 1.

ments of this power exerted by God in his Prophets; such as that of *Elias* his restoring the widow of *Sarepta's* son; of *Elisha* raising the son of the *Shunamite*; that of the dead man reviving when his body touched the Prophet's bones; to you therefore this fact cannot be in it self incredible; nor indeed can it, for the reasons suggested to any man reasonably seem impossible.

2. Nor was it apparently in its design unworthy of God, or inconsistent with his holy Will: For the ends thereof (such as were pretended by the attesters of it) were as very great and important, so most good and reasonable; it aimed at no slight or trifling matter, but such as in appearance highly concerned the glory of God, and conduced to the welfare of mankind, it professing it self to be a credential of the greatest Embassy that ever came down from heaven to men, importing the complete revelation of God's will, and procurement of Salvation to the world; and did therefore in that respect well become the wisdom and goodness of God to use it. It pretended to confirm a doctrine containing most true and worthy representations of God, the best that could be; declaring most gracious intentions in God of mercy and kindness toward men; no less proper for him than grateful and needful for us; prescribing most excellent rules and patterns of life (wherein the most genuine piety and virtue, most exact justice and hearty charity, most strict purity and sobriety are prescribed) yielding the most effectual helps to the practice of all goodness, and tendering the best encouragement thereto; and upon this account therefore also most worthy of God. So that indeed God could not be conceived to perform such a miracle to better purpose, than for promoting the designs it pretendeth, being so very great, and so very good: it could not be improper for the Divine power to be thus exerted in favour of a Religion so apt to promote his glory, and to procure our benefit.

If it be said that it is absurd or improbable, that God should chuse to perform this miracle upon a person of this sort; one so mean and obscure in the state of his life, so wretched and infamous for the manner of his death; that God rather should have chosen for the interpreter of his mind, and minister of his purposes a Personage more illustrious in rank, and clear in repute: I answer, *first*, that our shallow fancy is a bad and incompetent Judge of what is reasonable or absurd, convenient or unfit in such cases, touching the counsels of God; *who seeth not as man seeth; whose thoughts are not as our thoughts, nor ways as our ways*; whose folly is wiser than men (that is, whose counsels, however seeming strange to our dim apprehensions, do yet far excell the results of our best wisdom) before whom, *whatever is high among men is abominable; with whom the wisdom of this world is folly*; whose judgments are unsearchable, and his ways are past finding out; as the Holy Scriptures teach us; and as good reason considering the vast distance between God and us, must acknowledge: so that no such appearance of incongruity can bottom a good exception against this, or any such matter; otherwise well attested. I say *farther*, that God's choice herein, being weighed by a pure and well disposed mind, will appear upon many accounts full of admirable reason and wisdom; all the Divine Oeconomy concerning our Lord, being rightly apprehended will soon appear *wisdom to the perfect*, and will be *justified by the children of wisdom*; as that wherein God's transcendent goodness, and perfect justice and glorious power are with greatest advantage displayed; whereby the hearts of men are most sweetly comforted under their sense of sin, and fear of misery; their minds are most clearly instructed in the ways of duty and happiness, their affections are most strongly excited and encouraged to the practice of all goodness: to such purposes (for causes which were it now seasonable, we could produce) our Saviour's low condition, and hard circumstances did admirably serve; and therefore upon that score it could not be unlikely, that God should raise him from the dead.

3. But neither (which is the most considerable point) is the testimony asserting this fact any-wise defective or insufficient, but hath all the conditions imaginably requisite to the most entire assurance of any such matter. The defect in the testimony, if any be, must arise from weakness or from wilfulness in the witnesses (their want of knowledge, or mistake, their want of honesty or their unfaithfulness) or from some circumstances belonging to their persons, or their testimony, able to invalidate their attestation; but none of these things can with reason be supposed; they were in all respects more than competently qualified to attest, and all

all considerable circumstances do assist in confirming their attestation; as by weighing the considerations following may appear.

1. As for their number, it was not one or two persons (although one or two ordinarily do suffice for decision of the greatest cases among men) but many who conspired in asserting it. *He was* (saith S. Paul, one who was conversant with these witnesses, who of a zealous adversary and fierce persecutor of this testimony, did become an earnest avoucher thereof) *seen of Cephas, then of the twelve, after he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain unto this present.* And, *This Jesus* (say the twelve Apostles) *hath God raised up, whereof all we are witnesses:* Twelve there were who principally were designed, and did take it for their especial duty to attest this matter beside many others, who in their order were able and ready to do it. 2 Cor. 13. 5, 6.
Acts 2. 14, 32.
5. 32. 1. 22.
10. 39.

2. These witnesses were no strangers to Jesus, but persons by long conversation most familiarly acquainted with him; *who had* (as it is said, and as it was notorious) *been with him from the beginning, who went out and in with him all the time* (that is for three years space) *from his baptism to his ascension.* John 15. 27.
Acts 1. 21, 22.

3. They did aver themselves to be *αὐτόπαι τῷ λόγῳ, or αὐτοκούαι, eye or ear witnesses* of the matter, as fully informed about it as senses could make them: *We cannot but speak what we have heard and seen. What we did see with our eyes, and what our hands did handle of the word of life, that we report unto you:* So S. John (the beloved disciple, who constantly attended on his dear Master) expresseth his testimony. And, *We have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and presence of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye-witnesses of his Majesty:* So S. Peter affirmeth concerning the manner of their testifying these matters. They did, I say, hear and see him, and that with all advantage possible or needful, not once or twice, not in passing or at distance, not in way of glimpse or rumour; but often, for a good time, thoroughly; many days conversing and interchanging discourses with him; *who* (as S. Peter in the name of the rest saith) *did eat and drink with him after that he rose from the dead.* And, *To whom* (as S. Luke their companion, from their mouth in our Text saith) *also he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God;* and, *He was* (saith S. Paul, another familiar of theirs) *seen many days of them which came up with him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are his witnesses to the people.* And two of these witnesses (S. John and S. Matthew) are in writings extant relaters of passages occurring in their conversation with him, very many, very sensible as can be. Luke 1. 2.
Acts 4. 20.
1 John 1. 1.
2 Pet. 1. 16;
Acts 10. 41;
Acts 1. 3.
Acts 13. 31;

4. We may also consider that the chief of these witnesses the Apostles themselves were at first (as S. Luke of them, and from them confesseth) so far from being easy or credulous in regard to this matter, that hearing it from others, who before had seen our Lord risen, they took it for a trifle or a fiction; and gave no credence thereto: *their words* (saith the Text) *ἐφάνησαν αὐτοῖς λόγος, did seem to them (a toy or) an idle tale, and they believed them not.* Yea some of them would hardly confide in their own eyes, nor would yield assent unto the fact appearing to them, until by letting them touch him, and shewing them the marks of his crucifixion remaining on his body, he demonstrated himself to be the very same person who had lived with them and died before them: *They were terrified and affrighted, and supposed they had seen a Spirit — And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, &c.* are words in the history. Luke 24. 11;
Matt. 28. 17.
Luke 24. 37;
John 20. 27.

5. Upon these grounds as they professed, they did without any mincing, hesitancy, or reservation in the most full, clear, downright and peremptory manner, with firm confidence and alacrity concurrently aver the fact: *They spake the word of God with boldness — and with great power gave the Apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus.* Acts 4. 31, 33.
14. 3.

Which things being weighed, it will appear impossible, that the attestors of this fact (supposing them in their wits and senses; and certainly they were so, as presently we shall shew, and as the thing it self plainly speaks) could not be ignorant therein, or mistaken about it. For if all the senses of so many persons in a matter so grossly sensible, so often and for such a continuance of time, can be distrusted; if the Apostles could imagine they saw their friend and Master, whom they so long had waited upon, when they did not see him; that they

heard him making long discourses with them, when they did not hear him ; that they did walk, eat and drink with him, did touch, and feel him when there was really no such thing, what assurance can we have of any thing most sensible ? what testimony can be of any validity or use ? on that hand therefore the testimony is impregnable, the witnesses cannot be accounted ignorant, or mistaken in the case ; for number, or for ability they cannot be excepted against.

It must be therefore only their seriousness, honesty, or fidelity that remains questionable in them ; they must be said to have wilfully deceived and imposed upon the world ; self-condemned hypocrites, impudent liars and egregious impostors they must have been, if their testimony was false ; but that they were not such persons, that they could not, and would not do so, there are inducements to believe as forcible as can be required, or well imagined in any such case.

1. They were persons, who did (with denunciation of most heavy judgments from God on the contrary practices) preach and press constantly and earnestly all kinds of goodness, veracity and sincerity, together with humility, modesty, ingenuity and equity, as main points of that Religion, which they by this testimony confirmed. All their discourses plainly breathed a most serious and sprightly goodness and charity toward men, very inconsistent with a base plot to delude them ; their doctrine utterly condemned all malice, all falshood, craft and hypocrisie, detruding into the bottomless pit all *that love or make a lye* : Consider these sayings and rules of theirs ; *As we have opportunity let us do good unto all men ; Let your moderation (or equity) be known to all men ; Shew all meekness to all men ; Laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and evil speakings, as new born babes desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby. Putting aside all lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour. Lye not to one another, seeing ye have put off the old man with his deeds. Brethren, be not children in understanding ; however in malice be ye children ; but in understanding be perfect men.* Such were their precepts discountenancing all malice, and all fraud ; propounded in a manner as serious and grave and simple as can be imagined ; all the tenour of their doctrine consenting to them : wherein also they earnestly declare against and prohibit all vanity of mind, and perverseness of humour, all affectations of novelty and singularity, all peevish factiousness and turbulence, all fond credulity, stupidity and precipitancy, all instability and giddiness of mind, all such qualities which dispose men without most sure and evident grounds either to introduce or to embrace any new conceits, practices or stories : such was their discourse, no-wise sounding like the language of impostors, deceit could hardly so disguise or so thwart and supplant it self.

2. Their practice was answerable to their doctrine, exemplary in all sorts of virtue, goodness and sincerity ; such indeed whereby they did in effect conciliate much respect, and authority to their words. *Ye are witnesses* (they could, appealing to the observers of their demeanour, and to the all-knowing God, say) *and God also, how holily and justly, and unblameably we behaved our selves among you that believe.* And, *We have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth commending our selves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.* Such a lively sense of goodness shining forth in a long course of practice ; so to bridle appetites, so to moderate passions, so to eschew all the allurements of pleasure, profit and honour, to bear adversities so calmly and sweetly, to express so much tender-kindness and meekness toward all men, to be continually employed in heavenly discourses and pious works, exhorting men by word, leading them by example to all sorts of goodness indisputably such ; to live thus, long and constantly, doth no-wise suit unto persons utterly debauched in mind, and of a profligate conscience ; who had devised, and did then earnestly drive on the propagation of a vile cheat : The life, I say, they lead was not the life of wicked impostors, but worthy of the divinest men ; fit to countenance and carry on the best design, such as they pretended theirs to be.

3. Farther, they were persons of good sense ; yea very wise and prudent ; not in way of worldly or fleshly wisdom, in skill to contrive or compass projects of gain, honour, or pleasure to themselves, to the commendation of them and of their testimony, they disclaimed being wise or skilful that way ; having no practice therein nor caring for it (for *they looked not much on things temporal and transitory ;*

fitory ; they did *not mind earthly things* ; they had not *their conversation*, or inter-^{2 Cor. 4. 18.}
rest here, but *above*, as citizens of another world, deeming themselves as but so-^{Col. 3. 2.}
journers and pilgrims here) but endued they were with a wisdom as in it self far ^{Phil. 3. 20.}
more excellent, so more suitable to the persons they sustained ; with great perspi-^{1 Pet. 1. 11.}
cacy, and sound judgment in the matters they discoursed about, and in the affairs
they pursued : such their writings, according to acknowledgment of innumerable ^{2 Cor. 11. 6.}
most wise and learned persons, fraught with admirable wisdom, and heavenly ^{1 Cor. 2. 1, 13.}
Philosophy (rude indeed and simple in expression, but most exact and profound in
sense) do manifest them to have been ; such the tenour of their doctrine evidenced
them, shining with that lustre and beauty, compacted with that strength and har-
mony, that whoever will not confess it to have proceeded from God, must, upon
consideration, however allow, that it could not have been devised by Idiots or
mean persons, but did come from persons of much subtilty and great reach : they
must be no fools who could frame a Religion merely by its own plausibility, with-
out any external help, able presently to supplant all the Religions in the world ;
and to stand durably firm upon the foundations laid by them. Such also the no-
table conduct of their great affair, (notwithstanding so mighty disadvantages and
difficulties) together with the prodigious efficacy their endeavours had upon men,
do evince them to have been : they surely could not be weak men, who in a
plain and peaceable way confounded all the wit and policy, all the learning and
eloquence, all the force and violence that withstood them : Experience did attest
to the truth of what S. Paul saith ; *The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but*
mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds, casting down imaginations
and every thing that exalteth it self against the knowledge of God, and bringing into
captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.

4. So were they qualified in their minds ; it must be farther also considered as
to their purposes in this case, that in falsely venting and urging this testimony, they
could not have any design gainful or beneficial to themselves ; but must therein
to no end be mischievous to themselves and others ; abusing others indeed, but
far more harming themselves ; they must be supposed voluntarily to have embrac-
ed all sorts of inconvenience, and designedly to have rendred themselves mise-
rable ; courting adversity, chusing naked and barren evil for its own sake : *For*
our exhortation was not of deceit, nor of uncleanness, nor in guile : For neither at
any time used we flattering words, as ye know, nor a cloak of covetousness, God is
witness : neither of men sought we glory. Profit, honour, or pleasure (those baits
which entice men to do evil, and set them upon wicked attempts) or any worldly
advantage thence to accrue to themselves they could have no design upon ; for
all those things wittingly and willingly they did abandon ; for the sake of this
very testimony incurring extremities of loss, of disgrace, and of pain : They did
plainly foresee what entertainment their testimony would find, and how in pro-
secution thereof they should be forced to indure all kinds of indignity, of damage,
and of hardship from men ; That *in this world they should have tribulation* ; that
men should deliver them up to be afflicted, and should kill them ; and that they should
be hated of all nations for his name sake ; their Master expressly had forewarned
them, That *all who would live godly in Christ Jesus* (that is, all professors of faith
in him, especially the Teachers thereof) *must suffer persecution* ; and *must through*
much tribulation enter into the Kingdom of God ; That *bonds and imprisonments*
did abide them in every place ; That *God had set forth the Apostles as appointed unto*
death, and exposed them as spectacles of scorn and obloquy to the world ; that
they were called to suffering, and appointed to this very thing, as to their office, and
their portion ; these were the rules and measures they went by ; these the expe-
ctations they had from the world : according unto which it did in effect happen
to them : *Even to this present hour, we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and*
have no certain dwelling place ; and labour working with our hands ; being reviled we
bless, being persecuted we suffer it ; being defamed we intreat ; we are made as the filth
of the world, and as the off-scouring of all things unto this day : So doth S. Paul
describe the Apostles condition.

5. All these afflictions, as they knowingly did object themselves to for the sake
of this testimony, so they did endure them with contentedness and joy ; when
they had been beaten, *they departed rejoicing, that they were counted worthy to suf-*
fer shame for the name of Jesus ; rejoicing that they were made partakers of Christ's
sufferings ;

Phil. 1. 29. sufferings; deeming it a privilege that was given them not only to believe in him,
 1 Pet. 4. 14. but to suffer for his name; thinking themselves happy in being reproached for the name
 Heb. 10. 34. of Christ, taking joyfully the spoiling of their goods, counting all things but loss for
 Phil. 3. 9. the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ their Lord; for whom they suffered the
 (1 Pet. 1. 6. loss of all things.
 Rom. 5. 3.
 Jam. 1. 2.)

6. Whence it is evident enough, that the satisfaction of their conscience, and expectation of future reward from God for the discharge of their duty herein, was all the argument which did induce them to undertake this attestation, all the reason that could support them in it; neither of which could be consistent with the resolved maintenance of such a fallhood. They could not indeed but grievously be tormented with remorse in their minds, they could not but dread severe vengeance from heaven, had they been conscious to themselves of so villanous a design of mocking God (whose name and express command they pretended, whose testimony and judgment they appealed to in this affair) and together of abusing the world with such an imposture. Such must have been their inward sense, and such their expectations, had they proceeded with guilty conscience in this business; but they do seriously profess otherwise, and the condition of things might assure us they were in good earnest: *εἰς τὸν*, For this end (saith S. Paul) we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, especially of those that believe. And our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God we have had our conversation in the world: And, Knowing the fear of the Lord (that is, being sensible of our duty toward God, and fearful of his judgment, if we transgress it) we perswade men; but are made manifest unto God; so they declare what principle it was that moved them to this practice, and the hope encouraging them in it they often express: If (said they) we suffer with Christ we shall be glorified together with him. And, We always bear about in the body, the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus may be made manifest in our body. And, It is a faithful saying, if we are dead with him, we shall also live with him; if we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him; if we deny him, he also will deny us. And, I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous judge shall give me at that day. So they profess concerning the grounds and reasons of their maintaining this testimony (and the points connected therewith) with so great present inconvenience to themselves; and the state of things rendreth their profession most credible; for they appear not so blind as not to see those inconveniences, nor so fond as to like them for themselves, or upon no considerable account: they confess, that they should be very stupid and senseless people, if they had incurr'd and underwent all this to no purpose, or without hope of good recompence for it after this life; If Christ be not risen (saith S. Paul) then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain; yea and we are found false witnesses of God, that he raised up Christ; — then we have only hope in this life; and, If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.

7. And how indeed is it conceivable, that such persons should be so bewitched with so passionate an affection, or so mighty a respect toward a poor dead man (one, who was born so obscurely, who lived so poorly, who died so miserably and infamously, as a malefactor; who indeed so died to their knowledge most deservedly, supposing they did know their testimony to be false; one who never was capable to oblige them or to recompence them for their actings or sufferings in any valuable measure) that merely for his sake, or rather not for his sake, but only for a smock of vain opinion about him (which could no-wise profit either him or them) they should with an inflexible obstinacy, despise all the world; expose themselves to all the persecutions of the world, and to all the damnations of hell. S. Paul surely had another opinion of Jesus, when he said, *Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us; for I am perswaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord; could they, think we, speak thus who knew Jesus to be a wicked deceiver, worthily hated of God and men? No assuredly,*

uredly, their speech and behaviour do palpably shew, that therefore they did bear so vehement an affection, and so high a respect toward *Jesus*, because as with Rom. 10. 9. their mouths they openly professed, so they were in their hearts thoroughly persuaded that he was the Son of God most dear unto him; who died for their sake, who was to their knowledge raised again; who also, according to his promises would recompence their faithful adherence to him with eternal joy and bliss.

8. Again, we may consider these witnesses to have of themselves been persons very unlikely to devise such a plot, very unfit to undertake it, very unable to manage and carry it through: Persons they were of no reputation for birth, for wealth, for any worldly interest; persons of no

education, no improvement, no endowments of mind (natural or artificial) any-wise considerable: they were as to condition and manner of life fishermen, publicans, and mechanicks; as to abilities of mind, they were (as they report themselves) ἀγέμματοι καὶ ἰδιῶται, illiterate and simple; they were also men of no great natural spirit or courage, but rather irresolute and timorous; as their deserting their Master, their renouncing him, their flying and sculking, reported by themselves, declare: *the base* or ignoble, the *despicable* or abject, the *weak*, the *foolish* things of the world, they did style themselves; and in that no adversary will, I suppose, contradict them. And is it possible, that a few (in this respect, I mean very few) persons thus condition'd and qualified, should have the wit to contrive, or the courage to maintain a forgery of such importance? what hope they could frame to themselves of any success therein, upon so extream disadvantages, is to any man very obvious. No kind of friends in all the world

could they imagine ready to back them, or yield them any encouragement; but heaven, hell, and earth they had reason to expect all to be combined in opposition to them and their design. They had all reason to fear, that God himself would cross them and blast their wicked endeavours to propagate the belief of such a lye, which most profanely they dared to father on him, and to vent in his name. They could not hope the father of lies himself, or any powers of darkness would be favourable or helpful to them; whose interest they so manifestly impugned; that the success of their doctrine, whether true or false, could not but much prejudice their Kingdom; as in effect we see that it did in a manner quite subvert it: they were sure among men to encounter the most potent, and most earnest adversaries that could be; all the Grandees of the world, both Political and Religious, deeply concerned in honour and interest to labour with all their power the detection of their cheat, and overthrow of their design: Whence it must be a boldness more than humane, more than gigantick that could bear up against all these adversaries; if their testimony was in their conscience false; against all those oppositions and disadvantages what could those poor men have to confide in, beside the natural prevalence of truth, and divine assistance thereto; being in their hearts assured of the former, and therefore greatly hoping for the latter?

9. And how indeed could such a cheat, contrived and conducted by so, to humane esteem, weak and silly a knot of people, so easily prosper, and obtain so wonderful a progress, so as presently to induce very many persons, μυριάδες πιστευόντων (*Myriads of Believers*, as it is Acts 21. 20.) many of them considerable (even πολλὸν ὄχλον ἱερῶν, *A great crowd or company of Priests*, as it is said in the Acts) to embrace it, together with all the crosses and damages attending it? so as to escape all inquisition about it, and overbear all persecution against it, being neither convincible by proof, nor contrrollable by force; but in despite of all assaults holding its ground, and running forward with huge success: according to that in the Acts: *So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed.*

10. The matter of their testimony (if we consider that as we should do) and its drift were very implausible, such as no impostors would be likely to forge, and no hearers, without great evidence of truth, would be ready to admit. It was no fine story apt to please the lusts, to flatter the humours, or to gratify the fancies of men; but rather very distastful to flesh and blood (whose inclinations is mainly thwarted) likely to offend the ears of all men, who would hear it; apt to raise fierce anger

οὐτε γὰρ λόγων ἰσχυρὸν, &c. Chryl. Tom. 5. Orat. 64. πνι διαρρήσαντες; ἀρα τὸ καὶ λάμψω καὶ τῷ ἀγκίστρῳ, ἢ τῇ σμίλῃ καὶ τῷ τρυπάνῳ, &c. ibid.

Acts 4. 13. Matt. 26. 56. John 20. 19. 1 Cor. 1. 27. 28. 1 Θεοῦ χάρις καὶ σκεῆψις. 2 Cor. 4. 7.

Καὶ ἐκ αὐτῶν ἔπος ἀτελέσι καὶ ταπεινοῖς πλάσαι πὶ τοῦτον ἐπιβλέποντες, ὡς οὐκ εἰ μαινόμενοι πρὸς αὐτοὺς οὐκ ἔστι παροργισμὸν, &c. Chryl. Tom. 5. Orat. 64. in Babilam.

Acts 6. 7.

2 Thes. 3. 1.

Acts 19. 20.

6. 7. 12. 20.

καὶ κρατῶν

ἐνέειπε, grew

by main force

Τὶ γὰρ μετ' αὐτῶν λέγοντες ἐδόκουν εἶναι πιδανοὶ; &c. Chryl. in 1 Cor. Or. 5.

Si rem credibilem crediderunt, videant quam sint solidi qui non credunt. Si autem res incredibilem credita est, etiam hoc utique incredibile est, sic creditum esse quod incredibile est, &c. Aug. de Civ. D. 22. 50

Vid. Chryl. Tom. 6. Orat. 61.

and indignation in *Jews*, great contempt and scorn in *Gentiles* toward it. The *Jews*, to whom it was first addressed, it did plainly charge with heinous iniquity and impiety in cruelly murdering a Person most innocent, most excellent in virtue and dignity, most dear to God; it withal defeated their longings for a gaudy *Messias*, who should restore and rear them into a lottly state of temporal prosperity, substituting in the room a Spiritual King, with overtures of felicity invisible and future, little suiting their gross conceit and carnal gust of things; it also imported the abrogation of those ritual Laws, and revolution of those special privileges wherein they did so please and pride themselves; it opened the enclosures of God's favour and grace, making them common to all people; it crossed their secular interests of emolument and honour annexed to the present outward frame of Religion, which it dissolved; it menaced severe vengeance and horrible desolation to their Nation and City; and was such a report likely to be entertained by them otherwise than with displeasure, and detestation? Neither unto the *Gentiles* was it likely to be acceptable; for it did also subvert all the Religion established among them by law and custom, destroying consequently all the interests of those who were concerned in upholding thereof; such as those who made that famous uproar, crying out, *Great is Diana of the Ephesians*: it seemed to thwart the common maxims of policy, and dictates of worldly prudence; it could not but appear to men prepossessed with admiration of secular wealth, power and

Vid. Acts 22.
21, 22.

Acts 19. 28,
34.

Εἰ γὰρ καὶ ἡ περὶ τοῦ πνεύματος ἐκείνου
— ἡμῶς εἰς πᾶσι μέλλει τοσαῦτα
τεκμήρια, καὶ τῆς ὑπερβολῆς, ὡς εἰπεῖν,
ἀπαιτεῖ τὴν μαρτυρίαν οἱ διαπιστῶσι
τοῖς γὰρ οὐκ ἔστι καὶ πολλοὶ ἕως ἄρτι
νέως καὶ ἀνεξέταστος, περὶ αὐτοῦ τὴν
ἀρχὴν καὶ τὴν περὶ τοῦ πνεύματος
μαρτυρίαν ἀξιοπείρας τῶν ἑχόντων
ταῦτα ἀνὰ τὴν πίσιν ἐδέξατο ψαλμῶν;
Chrys. Tom. 5. Or. 64.

Τίς ἔτι ἐμμένει ἡ ταῦτα ἀκού-
ων ὡς ψαλμοῖς ῥήματι πνεύματος περὶ πνεύ-
ματος τοῦτου; Ibid.

glory, a story most ridiculously extravagant, that so pitiful and wretched a person, as *Jesus* seemed in the eye of the world to have been, should in this miraculous way be declared the Son of God, and Lord of all things. Author of life and Salvation to all men; Sovereign object of all worship and obedience: such a story therefore it was not likely that any men in their senses should conspire to forge, should offer to obtrude on the world, so incapable of it, so averse from embracing it; and being such it were strange that by a general repulse it should not presently be stifled and quell'd.

11. One would indeed think that this report had it been false, might easily have been disproved, and quash'd: they who were mightily concerned, and eagerly disposed to confute it, wanted no means of doing it: they were not surprized in the matter; but were forewarned of it, and did forebode it coming; they were not drowsy, or neglectful, but very apprehensive, careful and cautious in preventing it that it should not be produced, or being so, that it might be defeated; for to this purpose they caused the Sepulchre of our Lord to be sealed up, and guarded by Soldiers; that being Masters of his body, they might by exhibiting it disprove any report that should be made about his resurrection: they had full opportunity of examining the matter to the bottom; it being fresh and presently divulged after its being reported done; they having also all the power and authority on their side, in furtherance of the discussion of the business; we may accordingly suppose them very zealous, diligent and active in thoroughly sifting it, and striving to detect the falshood therein: they did so certainly, and thereto they added strict prohibitions, fierce menaces, and bloody persecutions toward the suppression thereof; yet could they not by all their industry confute it, nor by all their fury quell it: Why? because it was not confutable; because truth prosecuted with vigorous integrity, and constancy, or rather supported by Divine protection and blessing, is invincible. Put case there were now the like fact by so many people, reported done within these two months, wherein the Church and State were in like manner exceedingly concerned, and should therefore employ all their power and care to discover the truth, one would think it impossible,

Acts 4. 17.
18. 5. 28.

Οὐδεμίαν γὰρ δεῖται βοήθειαν ἢ τ' ἀλη-
θείας λόγος, ἀλλὰ πᾶν μυεῖν ἔχει τὸς
σβεννύοντας αὐτὴν, καὶ μόνον ἐκ ἀφανί-
ζεται, ἀλλὰ καὶ δι' αὐτῶν ἡ ἐμπροσθεν
ἐπιχειρῶντων καιροπείρα καὶ ὑπολογισ-
μένη, ἔστι. Chrys. Tom. 5. Orat. 64.

that were it an imposture it should escape detection, and being soon, with the general satisfaction of men quite blown away and exploded; this is the fate of all falshood, standing merely upon its own legs, and not propped by worldly power; but truth, as in this present case, is able to subsist by its own strength, especially heaven being concerned to aid it.

12. As also this testimony had no power to sustain it, so it used no flight to convey it self into the persuasions of men: it did not creep in dark corners, it did not

not grow by clandestine whisper; it craved no blind faith of men: but with a barefaced confidence it openly proclaimed it self, appealing to the common sense of men, and provoking the world to examine it; daring all adversaries here to confront it, defying all the powers beneath to withstand it; claiming only the patronage of heaven to maintain it. 1 Thes. 5. 21.

13. Farthermore, the thing it self had it been counterfeit, was in all probability apt to fall of it self; the witnesses clashing together, or relenting for their crime. That advice of Gamaliel had much reason in it; *Refrain* (said he) *from those men, and let them alone, for if this counsel, or this work be of men, it will come to nought*; καταλυσθήσεται, it will of it self be dissolved or destroyed: For how indeed could it be, that among so many confederates in a juggle, not one either checked by conscience, or daunted by hazards, or wearied and worn out by sufferings, should flinch and fall off, so as to detect the plot, disavow his fault, and retire from persecution, but that each one should persist stedfast in so high a strain of vile dissimulation? If one had fallen off, he had certainly spoiled all the plot, opened all mens eyes, and prevented the faith of any one person to the story, and what cement could firmly combine such a pack of men to God, and to all the world, that they should continue invincibly stiff in their faith to one another, and constantly true to so vain a design, good to no man, worst to themselves? that, I say, twelve such persons, every one for a long time, during their whole life, should persevere immovable in so extravagant a resolution of lying, so as by no regrets, or dissatisfactions from within, no threats, no perils, no troubles, or pains from without to be ever driven out of it, but should die with it in their mouths, yea, rejoyce and glory in dying for it; should dying carry it into the presence of God, and dare with it to appear at his judgment; is exceedingly strange and incredible: It must therefore surely be truth alone that could set them on this design, and could uphold them steady in it; so unanimous a consent, so clear a confidence, so firm a resolution; so insuperable a constancy and patience nothing but a sense of truth could inspire men with, nothing but a perfectly good conscience could sustain. Possible it is, that in matters of speculation and subtilty men upon slender grounds may be peremptorily opinionative, and desperately pertinacious; (this experience sheweth): but in a matter of this nature (a matter of plain fact, and gross sense) none can well be imagined (none especially so qualified, in such circumstances, to such purposes can be imagined) to be so wretchedly stupid, or desperately obstinate. Acts 5. 8.

14. He then whodoubts of the sincerity of these Witnesses, or rejects their testimony as incredible, must instead of it admit of divers stranger incredibilities; refusing his faith to one fact, devious from the natural course of things, but very feasible to God; he must thence allow it to many others, repugnant to the nature of man, and to the course of humane things; performed without God, yea against him. It is credible that persons otherwise through all their lives strictly blameless, and rigidly virtuous (even in the most heavenly parts of goodness, in humanity, meekness, peaceableness, humility and patience) should against clearest dictates of conscience, peremptorily and perseveringly commit so palpable villany, as to broach and propagate such an imposture; that they, all whose demeanours and discourses evidently did tend to the advancement of God's glory, and promoting goodness, should so in their hearts utterly despise God, and detest goodness; or that persons in a strain incomparably solemn and serious should so plainly teach, so strongly press, so otherwise uniformly practise highest good will and beneficence toward all men, while they were with all their mind and might striving to gull and abuse men? Is it conceivable, that men otherwise in all their actions so wise, and well advised (able to manage and to perform so great matters) should so zealously drive on a most vain and senseless project, with more unwearied industry labouring to maintain, and disperse a lye, than any men beside did ever strive in behalf of truth? Is it not marvellous that men in all respects so impotent, without any arms or aids, should adventure on so high an enterprize, should with so happy success achieve it; that naked weakness should boldly assault, and thoroughly over-power the greatest might; pure simplicity should contest with and baffle sharpest wit, subtle policy, and deepest learning; that rude speech (void of strength or ornament) should effectually persuade an uncouth and unpleasant tale, against all the finest, and strongest Rhetorick in the world? Is it not strange that Aug. de Civ. D. 22. 5.

a crew of vile and base persons should so inseparably be linked together with no other hands, than deceit and dishonesty ; no truth, no virtue, no common interest helping to combine, or contain them together ? Is it to be believed that men of sense should *gratis*, for no considerable end or advantage, voluntarily embrace and patiently endure all that is distastful to humane nature, freely exposing themselves they knew not why, only for the sake of a story, to the fury of earth and flames of hell ; eagerly sacrificing their fortunes, credits, lives, and souls themselves to the Ghost of a forlorn wretch, and infamous caittiff ? Is it not in fine prodigious, that so implausible a falsehood upon all greatest disadvantages should encounter, vanquish and triumph over truth ; these are incredibilities indeed, able to choak any man's faith ; yet he that rejects this testimony must swallow and digest them, together with others like them of as hard concoction.

Acts 2. 43.

5. 12.

Acts 14. 3.

19. 11.

Acts 4. 33.

Heb. 2. 4.

Ἀμύχανον γὰρ
ἀνθρώπων
ἵδον ὅτι
ὁμοῦ πάντων
τοῦ πνεύματος
ἐκείνου.

Chryf. in Act. 1. 3. Vid. in 1 Cor. Or. 5.

Si per Apostolos — ista miracula facta esse non credunt, hoc nobis unum grande miraculum est, quod ea terrarum orbis sine ullis miraculis credidit. Aug. de Civ. D. 22. 5.

15. To these things we may add, that God himself did signally countenance, and ratify this testimony ; not only by conferring on the avowers thereof extraordinary graces (invincible courage, irresistible wisdom, indefatigable industry, inflexible constancy and patience, admirable self-denial, meekness, charity, temperance, and all virtues in an eminent degree) not only farther by a wonderful success and blessing bestowed upon their endeavours ; but by enduing them with supernatural gifts, and enabling them to perform miraculous works openly and frequently ; So that by the hands of the Apostles many wonders and signs were done among the people — The Lord giving testimony unto the word of his grace, and granting signs and wonders to be done by their hands ; so that with great power gave the Apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all ; (that is, there was a great appearance of the divine favour toward them, and of the divine operation in and by them) Yielding which kind of attestation was the ancient and usual method of God in authorizing his messengers, and approving the declaration of his mind by them ; (the Seal as it were put to the Letters credential from heaven) nor could God afford more convincing signs than these of his approbation to any person or design : that God did thus *συνεπιμαρτυρεῖν* attest (as the Apostle to the Hebrews speaketh) together with these Witnesses, if the Apostolical history (bearing in it all the characters of a simple, faithful and upright narration) did not relate ; yet the effect of this testimony, so speedily and easily prevailing every where, would render it highly probable, since in likelihood, no humane endeavour, without divine assistance, could accomplish a business so great and difficult : if they did no miracles, *οὐτο μέγιστον σημεῖον*, this (as S. Chrysostome says) was the greatest miracle that could be, that such a testimony should without any miracle prevail.

16. Now for conclusion, all these things being considered, it is sufficiently apparent, that this testimony is above all exception ; that no matter of fact ever had, or well could have in any considerable respect, a more valid and certain proof : the greatest affairs in the world (concerning the rights and reputations, the estates and the lives of men) are decided by testimonies in all regards less weighty ; so that to refuse it, is in effect to decline all proof by testimony, to renounce all certainty in humane affairs, to remove the grounds of proceeding securely in any business, or administration of justice ; to impeach all history of fabulousness, to charge all mankind with insufficiency, or extreme infidelity (for if these persons were not able, or not honest enough, what men can ever be supposed such ; who can by greater arguments assure their ability, or their integrity in reporting any thing ?) to thrust God himself away from bearing credible attestation in any case (for in what case did he ever or can he be conceived to yield, an attestation more full or plain, than he did in this ? what farther can he perform needful to convince men endued with any competency of reason and ingenuity, or to distinguish them from men of contrary disposition, unreasonably and unworthily incredulous ?) in fine, to distrust this testimony is therefore in effect to embrace the vanity of the most wanton or wicked *Sceptick*.

The Use of all is in short this, that he should heartily thank God for so clear and strong an assurance of the truth of our Faith ; that we therefore firmly embrace

brace it, and steadily persevere therein; that we obey it, and bear fruits worthy thereof in our practice; that so doing we may obtain the blissful rewards which upon those terms it propoundeth and promiseth: That we may all so do, God of his mercy grant, through *Jesus Christ* our Lord, to whom for ever be all glory and praise.

Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make us perfect in every good work to do his will, working in us that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

The third day he rose again, &c.

S E R M O N XXX.

LUKE XXIV. 46.

And he said unto them, Thus it is written; and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day.



THE words of men leaving this world (as proceeding from a depth of serious concernedness, and influenced by a special providence) are usually attended with great regard, and a kind of veneration; these are such, even the words of our departing Lord; the which therefore deserve and demand our best consideration.

They respect two points of grand importance, the passion and the resurrection of our Lord; of which I shall only now consider the latter, as being most agreeable to the present season: and whereas there be divers particulars observable in them, I shall confine my discourse to *one*, being the main point; couched in those words, *thus it behoved*; which import the needfulness, and expediency of our Lord's resurrection: Of which I shall endeavour first to declare the truth, then to shew the usefulness, by a practical application thereof.

The resurrection of our Lord may appear to have been needful and expedient, upon several good accounts.

1. It was needful to illustrate the veracity, wisdom and providence of God, by making good what he had signified in the ancient Scriptures concerning it; either in mystical adumbrations, or by express predictions; understood according to those infallible expositions, which the Apostles did receive from the instruction of our Lord, or from illumination of that Spirit which dictated the Scriptures: the particular instances, as being obvious, and requiring large discourse, I now forbear to mention.

2. It was needful in congruity to other events foretold, and in order to the accomplishment of those designs which our Lord was to manage: the whole œconomy and harmony of the Evangelical dispensation, as it is represented by the Prophets, doth require it: It was, according to their predictions, designed, that Christ should erect a spiritual Kingdom, and administer it for ever, with perfect equity, in great peace and prosperity; that he should in our behalf atchieve glorious exploits, subduing all the adversaries of our salvation, (*sin, death and hell*;) that he should establish a new Covenant, upon better promises, of another eternal

most happy life, assuring to the embracers thereof an entire reconciliation and acceptance with God; that he should convert the world to faith in God, and observance of his will: In execution of these purposes, it was declared that he should undergo suffering, and be put to death in a most disgraceful and painful manner: It consequently must be supposed, that from such a death he should conspicuously and wonderfully be restored to life; how otherwise could it appear, that he did reign in glory, that he had obtained those great victories, that he had vanquished death, that the former curses were voided, God appeased, and mankind restored to favour by him? Had the grave swallowed him up, had God *left his soul in hell*, had he rested under the dominion of common mortality, had he after his dismal passions no evidence of special favour toward him shone forth; What ground had there been to believe those great things? Who would have been persuaded of them? The *Scripture* therefore, which *foretelleth the sufferings of our Lord, and the glories following them*; which saith, that *having drunk of the brook in the way he should lift up his head*; that *when he had made his soul an offering for sin, he should prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord should prosper in his hand*; that *because he had poured out his soul unto death, God would divide him a portion with the great, and he should divide the spoil with the strong*; that *unto him whom man despised, to him whom the nation abhorred, Kings should look and arise, Princes should worship*; the *Scripture*, I say, foretelling these events, doth consequentially imply the needfulness of his resurrection.

1 Pet. i. 11.
Luke 24. 26.
Psal. 110. 7.
Isa. 53. 10, 12.

Isa. 49. 7.

3. It was requisite in it self; or in respect to the many great ends for which it serveth, and the excellent fruits, which it is apt to produce: as will appear by reflecting on those, which are suggested in the *New Testament*.

I pass by its particular usefulness in regard to our Lord's *Apostles* and *Disciples*; its serving to reinforce their faith, and rear their hopes, being staggered by his passion; to comfort them in those sorrowful apprehensions, and despondencies of heart, which arose from the frightful events befalling him; to enlighten their minds by more perfect instruction, removing their ignorance, and reforming their mistakes concerning him, and *the things of his kingdom*; to furnish them with instructions and orders requisite for managing the employments committed to them; to arm them by consolatory discourses and gracious promises of support against the difficulties, hazards and troubles they were to encounter, in the profession and propagation of his doctrine; in fine, by all his admirable deportment with them, and his miraculous departure from them to confirm them in their faith, and encourage them in their duty: these particular uses, I say, we shall pass over, insinuating only upon those more common ends and effects in which our selves and all Christians are more immediately concerned.

Μάλα πάλιν
των σημείων
ἐκείνων καὶ
τῆς ἀγαλλίας
ἐν ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις
μιζεν. Chrys.
in Rom. 1. 4.

4. A general end of it was the production and corroboration of faith in us concerning all the Doctrines of our Religion; for that by it the truth of all our Lord's declarations concerning his own person, his offices, his power, his precepts and his promises (to the highest pitch of conviction and satisfaction) was assured; it being hardly possible, that any miracle could be greater in it self for confirmation of the whole, or more proper for ascertaining the parts of our Religion. But more particularly;

5. *First*, From it the dignity of our Lord's person, and his especial dearness to God (to the voidance of all exceptions, and surmises against him) did appear.

John 7. 24.

If the meanness of his birth and parentage, if the low garb and dim lustre of his life, if the bitter pains and shameful disgraces of his death (however accompanied with rare qualities shining in him, and wonderful deeds achieved by him) in persons standing at distance, casting superficial glances on things, and judging by external appearances, might breed disadvantageous apprehensions, or suspicions concerning him, whether he were indeed as he pretended, the Son of God, designed by him to be the Saviour of mankind, *the Lord of all things*, the Judge of the world; the wonderful power, and signal favour of God demonstrated in his resurrection, served to discuss those mists; and to correct such mistakes, evincing those temporary depressions to have been only dispensations preparatory toward his greater exaltation in dignity, and apparent favour with God; for *though* (saith S. Paul) *he was crucified out of weakness, yet he liveth by the power of God*; that is, although in his sufferings the infirmity of our nature assumed by him was discovered, yet by his recovering life the divine power attending him was eminently

2 Cor. 13. 4.

eminently

nently declared ; it was indeed *an excessive grandeur of power, an energy of the might of strength*, which God did exert *in the raising of Christ from the dead*, as the *Apostle* labour^{eth} to express the unexpressible eminency of this miracle ; and being so high an instance of power, it was consequently a special mark of favour ; God not being lavish of such miracles, or wont to stretch forth his arm in behalf of any person, to whom he doth not bear extraordinary regard : the which consequence also, by reflecting on the circumstances, and nature of this event, will farther appear.

He was persecuted and put to death as a notorious malefactor, and an enemy to God, to true Religion, to the common peace, to goodness ; and his being delivered up to suffer was an enforcement of that pretence ; for his adversaries thence did argue, that God had disavowed, and deserted him ; they insulted over him as one in a forlorn condition, *esteeming him* (as the *Prophets* foretold) *stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted* : but God thus, by his own hand, undoing what they had done against him, did plainly confute their reasonings, did evidence their accusations to be false, and their surmises vain, did in opposition to their suggestions approve him a friend and favourite of God, a patron of truth, a maintainer of piety and peace ; one meriting, because obtaining, the singular countenance and succour of God.

And if yielding our Lord over to death (which being a total incapacity of enjoying any good, doth signifie an extremely bad state) might imply God's displeasure or disregard toward him ; (as indeed it did in a sort, he standing in our room to undergo the inflictions of divine wrath and justice ;) then answerably restoring him to life (which, as the foundation of enjoying any good, doth represent the best condition) must demonstrate a singular tenderness of affection, with a full approbation and acceptance of his performances : this indeed far more pregnantly doth argue favour, than that could imply displeasure ; for that may happen to the best men upon other grounds, this can bear no other than a favourable interpretation.

Farther, to give life doth ground that relation, which is deepest in nature, and importeth most affection ; whence in the Holy stile, to raise up to life, is termed to beget ; and *the regeneration* is put for the *resurrection* ; so that it being a paternal act, signifieth a paternal regard : and thence perhaps *S. Paul* telleth us, that our Lord *was declared, or defined to be the Son of God, by his resurrection from the dead*.

6. *Secondly*, By our Lord's resurrection we may be assured concerning the efficacy of his undertakings for us : for considering it we may not doubt of God's being reconciled to us : of obtaining the pardon of our sins, and acceptance of our persons, of receiving all helps conducive to our sanctification, of attaining final happiness, in case we are not on our parts deficient ; all those benefits by our Lord's resurrection, as a certain seal, being ratified to us, and in a manner conferred on us.

As God, in the death of our Lord, did manifest his wrath toward us, and execute his justice upon us ; so in raising him thence correspondently God did express himself appeased, and his law to be satisfied ; as we in his suffering were punished (*the iniquity of us all being laid upon him*) so in his resurrection we were acquitted and restored to grace ; as *Christ* did merit the remission of our sins, and the acceptance of our persons by his passion ; so God did consign them to us in his resurrection ; it being that formal act of grace, whereby, having sustained the brunt of God's displeasure, he was solemnly reinstated in favour, and we representatively, or virtually in him ; so that (supposing our due qualifications, and the performances requisite on our parts) we thence become compleatly justified, having not only a just title to what justification doth import, but a real instatement therein ; confirmed by the resurrection of our Saviour ; whence *He was* (saith *S. Paul*) *delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification* ; and *who then* (saith the same *Apostle*) *shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect ? it is God that justifieth ; Who is he that condemneth ? it is Christ that dyed, yea rather that is risen again* : Our justification and absolution, are (ye see) rather ascribed to the resurrection of *Christ*, than to his death ; for that indeed his death was a ground of bestowing them ; but his resurrection did accomplish the collation of them, for since (doth the *Apostle* argue) God hath acknowledged satisfaction

faction done to his justice, by discharging our surety from restraint, and from all farther prosecution; since in a manner so notorious, God hath declared his favour toward our proxy: What pretence can be alledged against us, what suspicion of displeasure can remain? Had Christ only died, we should not have been condemned, our punishment being already undergone; yet had we not been fully discharged, without that express warrant and acquittance, which his rising doth

1 Cor. 15. 7. imply; so again may S. Paul be understood to intimate, when he saith, *If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain, ye are yet in your sins*: Death (or that obligation

Heb. 2. 14. 2 Tim. 1. 10.

Rom. 8. 3. 5. 18. 6. 23.

1 Cor. 15. 14.

Morte calcata surrexit. Hier. Ep. 129.

1 Cor. 5. 21.

Διὰ τὴν ἀναστάσεως τοῦ Σαυῶτος ὑπεργνώστης ἀπέλυσε. Chrys. Rom. 1. 4.

Τὸν οἱ νεκροὺς ἐκ τῆς ἀναστάσεως. Chrys. Tom. 5. Or. 84.

Dominus sua resurrectionis pignore vincula solvit inferni, &c. Ambr. ad Grat.

Per resurrectionem Christi & mors interitum, & vita accepit initium. Leo M. Ep. 81.

to die, to which we did all for our transgressions stand devoted) was *condemned*, and judicially *abolished* by his death; but it was executed and expunged in his resurrection; in which *trampling thereon* he crushed it to nothing; wherefore therein mankind revived, and received the *gift of immortality*; that being a clear pledge, and full security, that *as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive*: He (saith S. Chrysostome) by his resurrection dissolved the tyranny of death, and with himself raised up the whole world: By the pledge of his resurrection (saith S. Ambrose) he loosed the bands of hell: Thereby (saith S. Leo) death received its destruction, and life its beginning: Therein not only the natural body of Christ was raised, but the mystical body also, each member of his Church was restored to life, being

thoroughly rescued from the bondage of corruption, and translated into a state of immortality; so that God (saith S. Paul) *hath quickened us together with Christ, and raised us together, and made us to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus*.

Eph. 2. 5, 6. Rom. 8. 21.

Hence in our Baptism (wherein justification, and a title to eternal life are exhibited to us) as the death and burial of Christ are symbolically undergone by us; so therein also we do interpretatively rise with him; *being* (saith S. Paul) *buried with Christ in Baptism, in it we are also raised together with him*; and Baptism (S. Peter telleth us) being the *antitype* of the passage through the flood, doth save us by the resurrection of Christ, presented therein.

Colos. 2. 13, 14.

1 Pet. 3. 21.

It also ministrerth hopes of spiritual aid, sufficient for the sanctification of our hearts and lives; for that he, who raised our Lord from a natural death, thence doth appear both able and willing to raise us from a spiritual death, or from that mortal slumber in trespasses and sins, in which naturally we do lie buried, to *walk in that newness of life* to which the Gospel calleth us; and in regard to which, God (saith S. Peter) *having raised his Son Jesus, sent him to bless us, in turning every one of us from his iniquities*.

Eph. 2. 10. Apoc. 20. 6. Acts 3. 26.

The same consequently is a sure earnest of our salvation; for, *If* (saith S. Paul) *when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life*.

Rom. 5. 10. 1 Pet. 3. 21.

7. Thirdly, By our Lord's resurrection, the verity of his doctrines, and the validity of his promises concerning the future state of men are demonstrated; in a (Joh. 20. 31.) way most cogent, and most pertinent: Any miracle, notoriously true, doth indeed suffice to confirm any point of good doctrine; but a miracle in kind, or involving the matter contested, hath a peculiar efficacy to that purpose: So did our Lord's resurrection, in way of palpable instance, with all possible evidence to sense, directly prove the possibility of our resurrection, together with all points of doctrine coherent thereto; (the substantial distinction of our soul from the body, its separate existence after the dissolution, and consequently its immortal nature, God's wise and just providence over humane affairs in this state, the scrutiny and judgment of our actions hereafter, with dispensation of recompences answerable;) those fundamental ingredients of religion, most powerful incentives to virtue, and most effectual discouragements from vice; the which (before much liable to doubt and dispute, little seen in the darkness of natural reason, and greatly clouded in the uncertainty of common tradition) as our Lord by his doctrine, first brought into clear light, so by his resurrection he fully did shew that light to be sincere and certain: Infinitely weak and unsatisfactory were all the arguments, which the most careful speculation could produce, for asserting those important verities, in comparison to that one sensible experiment attesting to them: For if our Lord, a man as our selves, did arise from the dead (his soul, which

2 Tim. 1. 10. Acts 26. 23.

which from the cross descended into the invisible mansions, returning into his body) then evidently our souls are distinct from our bodies, and capable of subsistence by themselves; then are they apt to exist perpetually; then may they be put to render an account for what is acted here, and accordingly may be dealt with: Hence may we see, that S. Paul discoursed reasonably, when he told the Athenians, that, *Now God hath appointed a day, in which he will judge the world in righteousness, by the man whom he hath ordained,* *αὐτὸν αὐτοὶ πάντες, exhibiting an argument most persuasive to all, having raised him from the dead;* that S. Peter also might well aver, that *God hath regenerated us to a lively hope of an incorruptible inheritance, reserved in heaven for us, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.*

Particularly the resurrection of our bodies, restoring our perfect manhood to us (a point wholly new to the world, which no Religion had embraced, no reason could descry) was hereby so exemplified, that considering it, we can hardly be tempted to doubt of what the Gospel teacheth about it; that he preceding as *the first-born from the dead*, and the *first-fruits of them which sleep, as our fore-runner*; and, *the Captain of life*; we *ἐν ᾧ ὡς ἑαυτοὺς*, in our due rank and season, as *younger sons of the resurrection*, as serving under his command and conduct, in resemblance and conformity to him, shall follow; so that, *If the spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead, dwelleth in us; he that raised up Jesus from the dead, shall also quicken our mortal bodies, by his spirit that dwelleth in us*; that, *If we have been planted with him in the likeness of his death, we shall also grow up in the likeness of his resurrection*; that, *As we have borne the image of the earthly man, so we shall also bear the image of the heavenly*; so that *God, who raised our Lord, shall also raise us by his power*; for we cannot but allow that consequence to be reasonable, which S. Paul doth imply, when he saith, *If we believe that Jesus died and rose again; even so them also, which sleep through Jesus, will God bring with him, reducing them into a state conformable to his; by re-union of their body and soul.*

8. *Fourthly*, It was a designed consequence of our Lord's resurrection, that he thereby should acquire a just dominion over us; for, *to this end* (saith S. Paul) *Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be the Lord both of the dead and living*: By the obedience of his death he did earn that dominion, as a worthy recompence thereof; He did by his blood purchase us to be his subjects and servants; but from his resurrection he began to possess that reward, and to enjoy his purchase; it being the first step of his advancement to that royal dignity and preeminence over all flesh; to which, in regard to his sufferings, God did exalt him; concerning which, before his ascension, he said to his disciples, *All power is given me in heaven and earth*: On so many great accounts was our Lord's resurrection behoofeful; so that it is no wonder, if God took such special care to assure its truth, and recommend its belief to us; appointing so many choice persons by their testimony to assert, and inculcate it; to do so being often expressed a main part, and peculiar design of the office Apostolical. Nor is it strange, that to the hearty belief, and ingenuous profession of this one Article (it enfolding, or inferring the truth of all other Christian doctrines) salvation is annexed, according to that assertion of S. Paul; *The righteousness of faith saith thus* (or this is the purport of the Christian Institution) *that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thy heart, that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved*. Nor is it much, that a consideration of this point should be so continually present to the minds of the ancient Christians, that when ever they did meet, they should be ready to salute one another with a *χρὶς ἐστὶν ἀνέστη*, *Christ is risen*, it importing so great benefits, and producing so excellent fruits; in regard whereto S. Paul expresseth his so ardent desire, and high esteem of *knowing Christ, and the power of his resurrection*; as the most valuable of all knowledges; which having in some measure declared, I come now briefly to apply.

1. *First* then; The consideration of our Lord's resurrection should strengthen our faith, and quicken our hope in God, causing us firmly to believe his word, and confidently to rely upon his promises, especially those which concern our future state. God having thereby, as by a most sensible proof, against all objections

Credentes resurrectionem Christi, in nostram quoque credimus, propter quos & ille obiit & resurrexit. Tert. de Pat. 9.

Resurrectionem carnis per semetipsum primus inivit. Cyp. Ep. 73.

Apoc. 1. 5. Col. 1. 18.

1 Cor. 15. 20.

Acts 3. 15. 5. 31.

Heb. 6. 20. 1 Cor. 15. 23.

Luke 20. 36.

Rom. 8. 11.

Rom. 6. 9.

1 Cor. 15. 22.

1 Cor. 6. 14.

1 Thess. 4. 14.

John 17. 2.

Phil. 2. 9.

Matt. 28. 18.

Acts 1. 22.

10. 41. 13.

31.

Rom. 10. 6, 9.

Phil. 3. 10.

of our feeble reason, demonstrated himself able, as by a most sure pledge declared himself willing to bestow upon us a happy immortality, in gracious reward of our obedience: for seeing by so illustrious an instance, God hath manifested that he is thoroughly reconcileable to sinners, that he bountifully rewardeth obedience, that death and hell are vincible, What reason can we have to distrust his fidelity, to doubt of his power, or to despair of his mercy? Surely, He that was so faithful in raising our Lord from the grave, so notably rewarding his obedience and patience (in advancing him to Supreme dignity and glory at his right hand) will not fail also to confer on us (walking in the footsteps of his piety) the promised inheritance of everlasting life and bliss, the never fading crown of righteousness and glory: Surely, by this noble experiment we are clearly informed, and should be fully persuaded, that nothing can destroy us, nothing can harm us, nothing can separate us from our God, and our happiness; that no force, no fraud, no spite of men, or rage of hell can finally prevail against us; What then reasonably can be dreadful, or discouraging to us? What should be able to drive us into distrust, or despair?

2. This point affordeth matter of great joy, and an obligation thereto. If the news of our Saviour's first birth were (as an Angel called 'em) *good tidings of great joy to all people*, how much more may the news concerning this second nativity of him be hugely gladsome? for in that birth he did but assume our flesh, in this he did advance it; then he began to sustain our infirmities, now he surmounted them; by his incarnation he became *subject to death*, by his resurrection death was subdued to him; at that he entred into the field, and set upon the bloody conflict with our foes; in this he returned a triumphant conquerour, having utterly vanquished and quelled them; the fury of the world, the malice of hell, the tyranny of sin, the Empire of death, all of them combined to render us miserable, he did in his resurrection perfectly triumph over; And doth it not then become us to attend his glorious victories with our joyful gratulations? Is it not extremely comfortable to behold our gallant champion (the only champion of our life and welfare) after all the cruel blows

Σήμερον ἡμῶν τὴ λαμπρὰ νικητήρια γέγονε σήμερον ἡμῶν ὁ δεσπότης τοῦ Χριστοῦ νάτε τρεῖς αἰῶνες ἡμεῖς, καὶ τὸ διαβόλου τῶν πνευματικῶν κατελύσας τῶν δια τῶν ἀναστάσεως ὁδὸν ἡμῶν εἰς σωτηρίαν ἐχαιροῦμεν.

Ἡ ποδὶς ἡ καὶ σωτηρίας ἐσθλὴ — ἡ τῶν εἰρήνης ἀποδόσεις. ἡ τῶν κατελλανθῶν ἀπορρομῶν, ἡ τῶν πλεῖστον ἀναστάσεως. ἡ τῶν δυνάστεων κατελύσας, ἡ τῶν διαβόλων ἡττῶσα — Chrys. Tom. 5. Orat. 85.

which the infernal powers laid on him, after all the ghastly wounds which humane madness did inflict; after he had passed through the scorching flames of divine wrath and justice, after he had felt the sorest pangs of death, perfectly recovered from all those distresses; standing upright, and trampling on the necks of his proud enemies? Are not most sprightly expressions of gratitude, are not most cheerful acclamations of praise due from us to the invincible *Captain of our salvation*? Shall we not with great alacrity of mind contemplate the happy success of that mighty enterprize, wherein no less our welfare, than his glory was concerned? Is it not a pleasure to consider our selves so exempted from that fatal doom, to which all humane race was sentenced; to see life and immortality so springing forth upon us; to view our selves the children of dust and corruption, from hence in age and dignity, so high equalled to the first-born sons of the creation? •

Luke 24. 41.

Quod credunt tardius, non est perfidia, sed amoris. Chrysost. Serm. 81.

It is said of the first disciples, that although they saw, and felt our Lord risen, yet *for joy they could not believe it*; so incredibly good was the news to them; excess of love and delight choaked, or rather suspended their faith; we cannot be such infidels from surprize, but let us be as faithful in our joy.

3. Great consolation surely it ought to breed in us, to consider, that by this event our redemption is compleated, and we become entirely capable of salvation; that in it a full discharge is exhibited from the guilt, and from the punishment of all our sins, whereof we do truly repent; that God's justice appeareth satisfied, and his anger pacified; that his countenance shineth out clearly with favour and mercy toward us; that our condemnation is reversed, our ransom is accepted, our shackles are loosed, and our prison set open; so that with full liberty, security and hope, we may walk forward in the paths of righteousness toward our better country, the Region of eternal felicity. Farther,

4. This consideration should be a forcible engagement upon us to obedience and a holy life. Our Lord did by his resurrection gain a dominion over us, un-

to which if we do not submit, we shall be very injurious and wicked ; unto which if we do not correspond by all humble observance, we shall be very ingrateful and undutiful : *He was raised to bless us, in turning every one of us from our iniquities ;* and no less unhappy, than unworthy we shall be, if we defeat that gracious purpose : It is the condition of our obtaining the happy fruits and benefits of his resurrection, that we should our selves rise with him *unto righteousness and newness of Life ;* by not complying therewith, we shall render his Resurrection unprofitable to us, becoming unworthy and incapable of any good advantage thereby. *Awake (saith the Apostle) thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee life.* To awake from our spiritual slumber, to arise from dead works, are the terms on which Christ doth offer that eternal happy life : for as the pains and ignominies of his death will no-wise avail those, who are not conformable to his death in dying to sin, and mortifying their Lusts, so will not they be concerned in the joys and glories of his Resurrection, who are not planted in the likeness thereof by renovation of their minds, and reformation of their lives ; for as he died, so he was also raised for us, that we should not henceforth live to our selves, but unto him who died and rose again for us. Our sins did slay him, it must be our repentance that reviveth him to us, our obedience that maketh him to live in our behalf : for Christ is not in effect risen to impenitent people ; as they continue dead in trespasses and sins, as they lie buried in corruption of heart and life, so their condemnation abideth, and Death retaineth its entire power over them ; they shall not attain unto that happy Resurrection, whereof our Lord's Resurrection was the pledge and pattern ; so did our Lord assure in his Preaching : *He (said our Lord) that believeth in the Son (that is, who with a sincere, strong and lively faith, productive of due obedience, believeth in him) hath everlasting life ;* but *he that disobeyeth (or with a practical infidelity disbelieveth) the Son, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him ;* whence we may well infer with S. Paul, *Therefore, Brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh : for if we live after the flesh, we shall die ; but if through the spirit we do mortify the deeds of the body, we shall live ;* that is, assuredly by obeying God's Will we shall obtain, by disobedience we must forfeit all the benefits of our Lord's Resurrection.

5. Lastly, The contemplation of this Point should elevate our thoughts and affections unto Heaven and heavenly things, above the sordid Pleasures, the fading Glories, and the unstable Possessions of this World : for *him we should follow whithersoever he goeth ;* rising with him, not only from all sinful Desires, but from all inferiour Concernments, soaring after him in the contemplation of our minds, and affections of our heart ; that although we are absent from the Lord in the body, we may be present with him in spirit, having our conversation in Heaven, and our heart there where our treasure is ; for if our Souls do still grovel on the earth, if they be closely affixed to worldly interests, deeply immersed in sensual delights, utterly enslaved to corruption, we do not partake of our Lord's Resurrection, being quite severed from his living Body, and continuing in vast distance from him : I shall therefore conclude, recommending that admonition of S. Paul ; *If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God ; set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth ; for you are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God ; that when Christ who is our life shall appear, then ye may also appear with him in glory.* Amen.

Now the God of peace that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the Blood of the everlasting Covenant, make us perfect in every good work to do his will, working in us that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

He ascended into Heaven, and sitteth at the right hand, &c.

S E R M O N X X X I .

Tab²

MARK XVI. 19.

He was received up into Heaven, and sate on the right hand of God.



OUR Lord after his Resurrection having consummated what was requisite to be done by him upon earth, for the confirmation of our Faith, and the constitution of his Church; having for a competent time conversed with his Disciples, enlightning their minds with knowledge of the truths concerning him, and in right understanding of the Scriptures relating to him; establishing their faith in immovable conviction, enflaming their affections by pathetical discourse, comforting their minds with gracious promises against tribulations ensuing, and arming their hearts with courage and patience against all oppositions of Earth and Hell; directing and prescribing to them how they should proceed in the instruction of men, and conversion of the world to the belief of his doctrine, the acceptance of his overtures, the observance of his laws; furnishing them with authority, and giving them orders to attest the truth concerning him, to dispense the grace and mercy procured by him, and to promulgate the whole will of God to mankind; promising them spiritual gifts and aids (both ordinary and extraordinary) necessary or conducive, either to the common edification or to the particular welfare of Christians, ordering them to collect and compact the society of faithful Believers in him, which *he had purchased with his Blood*; in fine, imparting to them his effectual benediction, and a promise of continual assistance in the prosecution of those great and holy designs which he committed to their management; having, I say, accomplished all these things, which St. Mark in this *verse* expresseth briefly by the words *μετὰ τὸ λαλῆσαι αὐτοῖς*, after he had spoken to them, and which S. Luke compriseth in the words *ἐνταλάσας αὐτοῖς*, that is, having imparted to them all needful instructions, and imposed all fitting commands upon them, He in their presence departed away into the possession of his glorious state; *He was* (saith S. Mark in our Text) *received up into Heaven, and sate on the right hand of God.*

Acts 1. 2.

Which words of the *Evangelist* do contain *two* grand points of our Faith, the *ascension of our Lord to Heaven*, and his *session there at God's right hand*; the right understanding and due consideration whereof [as it is now peculiarly, when the Church recommendeth these points to be the subjects of our devotion most seasonable, so perpetually] is of great use for the edification of our souls, and the direction of our practice: in order to which purposes, I shall endeavour to explain them, to confirm the truth of them, to shew the ends and effects of them, and practically to apply them.

I. *He was received into Heaven*; this is the *first* point: wherein we may observe the *act*, and its *term*: The *act*, ἀνελήφθη, he was assumed, or *taken up* (saith S. Mark here) ἀνεβήκεν, he was elevated or *carried up*, and ἐπὶ ἦν, he was *born up* (saith S. Luke) Acts 1. 9. ἐπορεύθη, he *went into Heaven*, saith S. Peter; which phrases do import that he was according to his humanity (or that his body and soul united together were) translated by the divine power into Heaven; or that he as God (by the divine power immanent

Luke 24. 51.
Acts 1. 9.
1 Pet. 3. 22.

immanent in him) did transfer himself as man thither ; so that he both was carried, and did go with a proper local motion, the term whereof was Heaven.

And what is meant by *Heaven* in the proper sense adequate to this matter, may appear from other places equivalent, by which this action, or the result thereof are expressed : it is called *ascending to his Father*, and *passing out of this world to his Father*, that is, departing hence into the place of God's more especial presence and residence ; where *he* (as the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews* saith) *appeareth to the face of God* ; being (as *S. Peter* speaketh) *exalted to the right hand of God* (that is to the greatest proximity, and therefore highest eminency with God.) It is termed being *taken up into glory*, and *entring into his glory*, that is, into a most glorious place, and state peculiar to him ; that place, which *S. Peter* calleth, the magnificent, or *most excellent glory*. It is stiled *entring*, *as τὸ εἰσέλθαι* (that is, *into the most inward part behind the veil* ; and into the especially *holy places* ; that is, into the inmost recesses of glory, inaccessible, and in degree incommunicable to any other. He is said to have *passed through the Heavens* (that is, through all places inferior to the highest top of glory and felicity) to have *ascended over above all the Heavens*, *ἐξῆλθεν πάντων τῶν οὐρανῶν*, to have *become higher than the Heavens*, or advanced above them ; by which expressions it appeareth, that the *term* of our Saviour's ascent, called *Heaven* here, was that place of all places in the *Universe* of things in situation most eminent, in quality most holy, in dignity most excellent, in glory most illustrious ; the inmost sanctuary of God's temple above *not made with hands* ; the most august chamber of presence in the *Celestial Court* : and whereas there are (as our Lord telleth us) *many mansions*, or apartments in the house of God, the chief and best of them our Lord hath taken up for his residence ; whereas Heaven is a place of vast extent, to the utmost top thereof our Lord hath ascended ; even into that *inaccessible Light* where God dwelleth.

And there, as it followeth, *He sitteth at God's right hand* ; the meaning of which words it is not difficult to find out ; it being obvious and clear, that the state of things above in the other blessed world, is in the Scripture represented to us by that similitude, which is most apt to beget in us reverence toward God, and which indeed really doth most resemble it ; by the state of a King here, sitting upon his Throne, being surrounded with Personages of highest rank, worth, and respect ; his nearest Relations, his dearest Favourites, the chief Officers of his Crown, and Ministers of his affairs there attending upon him : so that yet for distinction, some place more eminent, and signally honourable, is assigned to that person, to whom the King pleaseth to declare most especial favour and regard ; the which place by custom, grounded upon obvious reason, hath been of old, and continueth still determined to the *next* place at the *right hand* ; (the *next* place, because nearness yieldeth opportunity for all kind of conversation and address ; at the *right hand*, because that hand hath advantage for strength and activity acquired by use, and therefore hath a special aptitude to offer any thing, or to receive, as occasion doth require) hence for instance of the custom among those from whom the phrase is taken, when *Bathsheba* King *Solomon's* Mother did come unto him, 'tis said, *The King — sate down upon his throne, and caused a seat to be set for the King's Mother, and she sate on his right hand*. Thus, our Lord, as Man, in regard to his perfect obedience and patience, being raised by God to the supreme pitch of favour, honour and power with him ; God having advanced him to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance unto Israel and remission of sins ; having superexalted him, and bestowed on him a name above all names, to which all knees in heaven, in earth, and under the earth must bow ; having seated him in heavenly places above all principality and authority, and power, and dominion, and name that is named, either in the present world, or in that which is to come ; having committed to him all authority in heaven and upon earth, and given all things into his hand ; having constituted him heir of all things, and subjected all things under his feet, and crowned him with Sovereign Glory and Honour ; having, in fine, given unto him all that which in the *Revelation* the innumerable host of Heaven acknowledged him worthy of ; *Power, and Riches, and Wisdom, and Strength, and Honour, and Glory, and Blessing* ; that is, all good and excellency conceivable in the most eminent degree, so that he in all things cometh to have the preeminence : God having, I say, conferred all these preeminences of dignity,

Eph. 1. 20. } power, favour and felicity upon our Saviour, is therefore said to have *seated him*
 Matth. 26. } *at his right hand*; *at the right hand of power* (say the Gospels) that is, so at the
 64. } right hand of the Almighty Potentate, that all power is imparted to him for the
 Mar. 14. 62. } governance and preservation of his Church, *at the right hand of the Majesty on*
 Lu. 22. 69. } *high*, and *at the right hand of the throne of God*, (saith the Apostle to the Hebrews),
 that is, so at the right hand of the Sovereign King of the world, that Royal
 dignity is communicated to him, in regard to which all honour and worship, all
 service and obedience are due to him from all creatures.

Thus much plainly the whole speech, *sitting at God's right hand*, doth import;
 the which matter is otherwise more generally and simply expressed by being at
 1 Pet. 3. 22. God's right hand, *Who*, saith S. Peter, *is gone into Heaven, and is at the right hand*
 of God, *Angels and Authorities and Powers being made subject to him*; and, *It is*
 Rom. 8. 34. *Christ*, saith S. Paul, *that dyed, yea rather that is risen again, who is also at the right*
hand of God. Sometimes also our Lord is represented standing at God's right
 Apoc. 5. 6. hand, as in the Revelation several times, and in the vision of S. Stephen, who
 14. 1. *saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God*; the which po-
 Acts 7. 55, 56. *sture doth then seem purposely assigned to him, when he is represented assisting*
his Servants, or in readiness to achieve some great Work for the good of his
Church; but most commonly, as in our Text, it is called *sitting*; the which word
 in ordinary use denoteth an abode, or permanency in any state: but there is per-
 haps some peculiar *emphases* designed in attributing to our Lord that position; it
 implying the solid ground, the firm possession, the durable continuance, the un-
 disturbed rest and quiet of that glorious condition, wherein he is enstated: the
 term sitting may also seem to augment the main sense, for that *sitting* is the most
 honourable posture, and therefore implieth to the utmost that eminency of favour
 and regard, which our Lord enjoyeth in God's sight. It
 may farther also denote the nature, quality and design of
 our Lord's preferment; his being constituted our Ruler and
 our Judge; *sitting* being a posture most proper and peculiar
 to such persons; whence this expression representeth him as
 seated upon a throne of Majesty, or upon a tribunal of Justice.

Sedere judicantis est, stare pugnantis;
Stephanus ergo in labore certaminis positus
stantem vidit, quem adiutorem habuit;
sed hunc post ascensionem Marcus sedere
scribit, quia post ascensionis suae gloriam
Judex in fine videbitur. Leo M.

I shall only farther observe, that the attainment, and settlement of our Lord
 in this high state, is by one word frequently in Scripture called his glorification.
 John 7. 39. *The Spirit* (it is said) *was not yet, because Jesus was not yet glorified*; and when
 12. 16. *Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things were written of him*; and,
 23. 13, 32. *The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified*; and, *Now Father, pray-*
 17. 1, 5. *eth our Saviour, glorify me with thee, with the glory which I had with thee before*
the world was; that is, constitute me as Mediator in glory supereminent above all
 Creatures, accordingly as in my divine nature I was eternally with thee most
 gloriously happy. And, *The God of your fathers*, saith S. Peter to the Jews, *hath*
 Acts 3. 13. *glorified his child Jesus, whom ye delivered up*; and, *We see Jesus, who was made*
 Heb. 2. 9. *a little lower than the Angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and ho-*
nour, saith the Apostle to the Hebrews. So much for explication of these points.

II. The confirmation of them may be drawn partly from *ocular testimony*, part-
 ly from *rational deduction*, partly from *their correspondence to ancient presignifica-*
tions, and predictions.

The ascension of our Lord toward Heaven was testified by the Apostles, who
 were eye-witnesses thereof; for *βλεπόντων αὐτῶν*, *they beholding, he was* (saith S. Luke)
 Acts 1. 9. *taken up, and a cloud received him out of their sight*.

His arriving at the supreme pitch of glory, and sitting there, is deduced from
 Luke 22. 69. the authority of his own word, and of his inspired Disciples, the which standeth
 Matt. 26. 64. upon the same grounds with other points of Christian faith and doctrine, the
 which it is not seasonable now to insist upon.

But it may be proper and useful to consider how they (as all other important
 events, and performances belonging to our Saviour) were by the Holy Spirit in
 the ancient Prophets, many ways presignified and predicted; that they were so,
 Luke 24. 25, our Lord telleth us; *Ought not Christ, said he, according to what the Prophets had*
 26. *spoken, to suffer, and so to enter into his glory*? And S. Peter assureth us, that,
 1 Pet. 1. 11. *The spirit of Christ which was in the Prophets, did testify before-hand the sufferings*
of Christ, and the glories after the same: So indeed there were many signal types
 repre-

representing them, and many notable passages respecting them, interpreted according to analogy, with other mystical representations.

Isaac, the Heir of promise, after his being devoted for sacrifice, and received from Death in a parable, was settled in a prosperous state of life, God being with him, and blessing him in all things. *Joseph* being freed from that death, to which by his envious Brethren he was designed, and raised from that burial in prison, into which by the Egyptian Gentiles he was cast, was advanced thence unto flourishing dignity, and established in chief authority over the King's house, and over all the land; which persons, as they were in other things, so may they well be conceived in these respects to have been Types of our Lord's Ascension and Glorification. *Joshua* (who in name and performances was the most exact Type of our Lord) being preserved from the common fate of the people, and with miraculous victory over all the accursed enemies of God's people, entering as Captain of Israel into the possession of the promised Land, the sure Type of Heaven, doth fitly represent the glorious ascension of our Lord into Heaven, and his everlasting possession thereof, together with the good people which follow his conduct. The great afflictions and depressions of *David*, with his restoration from them unto a mighty height of royal splendour and prosperity (all enemies foreign and domestic being subdued) may be also supposed to typify the same; his expressions in acknowledgment and thanksgiving for them seeming to allude hither, and to be more congruously applicable to our Lord, than to himself; such for instance as those are in the 21st Psalm: *He asked life of thee, and thou gavest it him, even length of days for ever and ever; his glory is great in thy salvation, Honour and Majesty hast thou laid upon him; for thou hast made him most blessed for ever, thou hast made him exceedingly glad with thy countenance, &c.* *Enoch* having walked with God (that is, in constant devotion, and in faithful obedience to God's will) and having received testimony that he pleased God, was taken unto God, thereby prefiguring the ascension of the Well-beloved, in whom God was most well-pleased: So was also the translation of *Elias into Heaven* in the presence of *Elisha*, and other his Disciples, after he most zealously had served God in declaration of his Will, and maintenance of his Truth, a manifest prelude of our Lord's like translation, after he had been employed in the like service, though far more high and important, and performed it in a more eminent manner.

The High Priest was a certain Type of our Lord, and the Jewish Temple a shadow of Heaven, and the Holy of Holies a figure of the highest place in Heaven; wherefore the High Priest's sole and solemn entry once only in the year into the most holy place, after having by a bloody Sacrifice made atonement for all the transgressions of the children of Israel, and his there sprinkling the blood of the Sacrifice upon the Mercy seat, and before the Mercy-seat (the emblem of God's special presence) doth certainly prefigure our Lord's ascending into Heaven, and sitting there at God's right hand; there, by representation of his merits and passion performing the office of a most holy Priest, and gracious Mediator for us: By his own blood (saith the divine Apostle) he entered once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. He is entered, not into the holy places made with hands, which are figures of the true, but into Heaven it self, now to appear in the presence of God for us.

Thus were these points aptly signified; they were also predicted: for *David* in the 68th Psalm, celebrating the glorious triumphs of God over the enemies of his people, and in consequence upon them his solemn entrance and seating himself in Sion, the Hill which he delighteth to dwell in (the usual emblem of Heaven) subjoineth; *Thou hast ascended on high* (לָמַרוֹ, to the high place of Heaven) *thou hast led captivity captive, thou hast received gifts for men, yea for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them;* which words appositely foretell our Lord's triumphant ascension, after having subdued all the enemies of his Church, and upon which he liberally dispensed wonderful gifts and graces to his people, and are by the unerring interpretation of *S. Paul* applied thereto.

The ascension of our Lord seemeth also (at least according to mystical exposition reasonably grounded) to be respected in the 24th Psalm, as generally throughout, so particularly in those words, *Lift up your heads O ye gates, and be ye lifted up ye everlasting doors, and the king of glory shall come in;* where according to the first, and more literal sense, the entrance of the Ark (the symbol of our Lord himself

Col. 2. 9. himself, in whom God is most specially present, *in whom all the fulness of the God-head dwelleth bodily*) into the Temple is described ; but in a second more elevate, more proper, and more full meaning the entrance of our Lord (the true *Shechinah*) into Heaven seemeth denoted ; the doors of that Temple not made with hands, into which he, *the Lord of Glory*, at his ascension did enter, being indeed most truly *the everlasting doors* ; and the doors of the earthly Temple being only such as typified them.

Again, The session of our Lord at God's right hand is expressly foretold by Psal. 110. 1. *David ; The Lord (saith he) said unto my Lord, sit at my right hand, until I have made thine enemies thy footstool* : Who but the *Messias* could be that Lord of *David*, unto whom God spake ? Who but he could be an eternal Priest after the order of *Melchisedec* ? Not only therefore our Lord himself expoundeth that place Matt. 22. 44. of the *Messias*, but the ancient *Jews* did commonly understand it to concern him ; as appeareth by their tacit consent, and forbearing to contradict our Lord so interpreting it.

In fine, all the Prophecies, which are very many, that concern the spiritual and eternal Kingdom of the *Messias* (his being invested with, and exercising regal dignity and power over God's people for ever) do in effect declare the ascension and session of our Lord ; particularly those of *David* ; *I have set my King upon my holy hill of Sion* ; and, *Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever ; the sceptre of thy Kingdom is a right sceptre* ; and that of *Daniel* ; *I saw, in the night visions, one like the Son of Man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the antient of days, and they brought him near before him ; and there was given him dominion and glory, and a Kingdom, that all people, nations and languages should serve him ; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his Kingdom that which shall not be destroyed*. So were these points foreshewed and foretold, to the manifestation of God's wisdom, and the confirmation of our faith.

III. Now for the ends and effects of our Lord's ascension, and his abode in Heaven at God's right hand (I join them together as coincident or subordinate) they are in the Scripture declared to be chiefly these.

In general, our Lord by them was invested in the compleat exercise of all the offices, and in the full enjoyment of all the privileges belonging to him as perfect Mediator, Sovereign King, High Priest, and Arch-Prophet of God's Church and People : He did initially, and in part exercise those functions upon earth ; and a ground of enjoying those preeminences he laid here, but the entire execution and possession of all, by his ascension into Heaven, and in his session there, he did obtain particularly.

1. Our Lord did ascend unto, and doth reside in Heaven at the right hand of divine Majesty and Power, that as a King he might govern us, protecting us from all danger, relieving us in all want, delivering us from all evil ; that he might subdue and destroy all the enemies of his Kingdom and our salvation ; the Devil with all his retinue, the World, the Flesh, Sin, Death and Hell ; whatever doth oppose his glory, his truth, his service, whatever consequently by open violence or fraudulent practice doth hinder our salvation : *The Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou on my right hand, until I have made thine enemies thy footstool* ; so God by the Holy Spirit in *David* did speak unto him ; whence S. Peter doth thus infer : *Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made him Lord and Christ* ; that is, his being seated in that place of special eminency is an infallible argument of his Royal Majesty and Sovereignty ; and, *This Man (saith the Apostle to the Hebrews) after he had offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever sate down at the right hand of God, from henceforth expecting till his Enemies be made his footstool* ; and accordingly, *He must (as S. Paul saith) reign, until he hath put all his enemies under his feet*. By various combats in his life our Lord did worst and weaken his and our enemies ; and in the last great battle, on his Cross, he did thoroughly rout and overthrow them ; but by his triumphant ascension into Heaven he led captivity captive, enjoying the glory and benefit of his victory ; by sitting at God's right hand he keepeth them down in irrecoverable *subjection under his feet*, so that none of them can make any successful insurrection against him : for no power certainly shall ever be able to withstand his will and command, who sitteth at the helm of Sovereignty immense, and omnipotent ; at that right hand, which can do any thing, which wieldeth and moderateth all things every where ; no fraud can

can elude, no secret Conspiracy can escape his knowledg, who sitting in that heavenly Watch-tower of infinite Wisdom and Omniscience, beholdeth whatever is done, said, or thought in all the World.

He so there with Royal Might protecteth us, and with Royal Goodness, Munificence and Clemency he doth also thence dispense grace and mercy to his faithful Subjects; for all good Gifts and Graces bestowed on the Church in general for common edification, and to each member thereof singly for its particular benefit, which are useful for *perfecting of the Saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edification of Christ's Body* in Truth, Holiness, Order and Peace, are expressed to proceed from our Lord's Ascension: *To every one of you (saith S. Paul) is given Grace according to the measure of the Gift of Christ;* that is, to every one of you proportionably according to the quality of your employment, rank, or station in the Church, and according to the particular exigency of your needs, as Christ in wisdom seeth fit, Grace is afforded, in correspondence (addeth he) to the Psalmist's Prophecy concerning our Saviour; *Having ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.* Eph. 4. 7, 8.

Particularly in virtue, or consequence of his Ascension and Glorification, to all true penitents and converts unto God, mercy and pardon for their sins are dispensed: that repentance should be acceptable to God, and available for attainment of Mercy, our Lord did indeed merit for us by his suffering; but he effectually dispenseth it in God's name, being now enstated in glory, as a noble Boon of his royal Clemency: *God, saith S. Peter, exalted him as a Prince and a Saviour to give repentance unto Israel, and remission of sins.* Acts 5. 31. Luke 24. 47.

2. Our Saviour did ascend, and now sitteth at God's right hand, that he may, in regard to us, there exercise his Priestly function. Having in this outward tabernacle once offered up himself a pure and perfect Sacrifice for the expiation of our sins, he entered within the veil, into the most Holy Place, there presenting his blood before God himself, to the full effect of obtaining mercy for us, and restoring us to God's favour: *He is (saith the Apostle) entred into heaven it self, there to appear in the presence of God for us;* so that whenever we by our frailty do fall into sin, and do heartily by repentance turn unto God, invoking his mercy, our Lord is ready by applying the virtue of his sacrifice, and pleading our cause with God, upon the terms of that gracious Covenant purchased and ratified by his blood, to procure mercy for us: for, *If any man sin, we have (saith S. John) an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, who is a propitiation for our sins, and for the sins of the whole world:* And, *who (saith S. Paul) is he that condemneth? it is Christ that died, yea rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us;* that is, seeing our Lord hath offered a well-pleasing sacrifice for our sins, and doth at God's right hand continually renew it, by presenting it unto God, and interceding with him for the effect thereof; What, supposing us qualified for mercy, can hinder us from obtaining it? Heb. 10. 12. Heb. 9. 24. 1 John 2. 1, 2. Rom. 3. 34.

Our Lord also doth at God's right hand discharge the Princely ministry of praying for us, and so interceding in our behalf, as thereby to acquire from God to be conferred on us whatever is needful, or conducive to our salvation: *He (saith the Apostle) is able to save to the uttermost those that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for us.* More particularly he, by his mediation there, doth procure for us a free access to God in devotion, a favourable reception of our petitions and services, a good success of them in the supply of all our needs; for, *Through him we have access by the Spirit unto the Father, and, Having a great High-Priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God—let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of Grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace in the time of need,* saith the Apostle to the Hebrews. And He, as he is represented in the Apocalypse, is that Angel of the Covenant, who at the golden Altar before God doth offer up the prayers of the Saints, incensed by his mediation and merits. Heb. 7. 25. Eph. 2. 8. Heb. 4. 14. 7. 25. Apoc. 8. 3.

Hence in his name, and through him it is, that we are enjoined to present our Prayers, our Thanksgivings, and all our Services; ** doing all whatever we do in the name of the Lord Jesus.* (John 10. 9. 14. 6. Rom. 5. 2. Eph. 3. 12. Heb. 10. 19. Eph. 5. 20. John 14. 13. 15. 16. 16. 23, 24.)

3. Again, Our Lord telleth us, that it was necessary he should depart hence, and enter into this glorious state, that he might there exercise his Prophetical office, by imparting to us his holy Spirit for our instruction, direction, assistance and comfort, * Col. 3. 17.

- Luke 24. 49. *Comfort. Behold (said he upon his departure) I send the promise of my Father upon you, but tarry ye in the City of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with the power from on high; this he promised then to his disciples, but did not perform, until his ex-*
- Acts 2. 33. *altation: Being therefore (saith S. Peter) exalted to the right hand of God, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear. He did not, and indeed (in consistence with the di-*
- John 16. 7. *vine purpose, and the designed œconomy of things) could not perform this until then; It is (said he) expedient for you that I go away, for if I go not away, the comforter will not come unto you, but if I depart, I will send him to you; that is, God, for promoting our Saviour's honour, and for the glory of his undertak-*
- John 7. 39. *ing, had in his wisdom determined, that so incomparably excellent a gift should be the reward of his obedience, the consequence of his triumph, the effect of his intercession above, an ornament of his Royal state, a pledge of his Princely munificence: It was reserved as a most rich and majestick gratuity, fit to be conferred at his coronation, then when he solemnly was inaugurated to love-*
- John 7. 39. *reign Dignity, and invested with power superlative: whence, The Holy Spirit (tis said in S. John) was not yet (that is, it was not yet poured forth, or bestowed in that conspicuous manner, and copious measure, as God intended it should be after-*
- John 7. 39. *wards) because Jesus was not yet glorified: It was from Jesus being received into glory, and advanced to God's right hand, that so transcendent a boon was in God's purpose, and according to his promise designed to come down.*

John 14. 2. 4. Again, Our Lord himself telleth us, that he went to Heaven, there to prepare a place for his faithful servants, to prepare mansions of joy and bliss in God's presence, where is fulness of joy; at his right hand, where are pleasures for evermore.

Psal. 16. 11. He accordingly hath (as the Apostle saith) entred as our ἀποδρόμος, our fore-runner into heaven; as an honourable Harbinger having disposed things there for our reception and entertainment; or rather as the son and heir of that great house, he by his authority and interest there procured leave for us to enter, and reside there,

John 17. 24. or carrieth us as his retinue thither; It is my will (saith he) that where I am, there should ye be also, that ye may contemplate my glory, and consequently may partake thereof.

It was indeed our Lord's ascension, which did unlock the gates of heaven, before shut upon us by our sins, which quenched the flaming sword, and discharged the mighty Cherubin, which guarded Paradise from all access to men.

Flammea illa rhombœa, custos paradisi, &c. presidentia foribus Cherubim Christi re-
stincta, &c. referata sunt sanguine. Hier.
Ep. 3.

Ἰουγενὲς ἐν τῷ ἁλῶτος. Chrys. ad
Heb. 9. 8.

Ante Christum Abraham apud inferos,
post Christum latro in paradiso, &c. Hier.
in Epitaph. Nepot. Ep. 3.

The ancient Fathers generally were of opinion, that Heaven, before our Lord's ascension, was inaccessible; and that no man had ever set foot therein, until our Lord, by his actual ascent and ingress, did open the passage thither, and removed the bars there: to prove this, they alledg that of our

John 3. 13. Lord in S. John, No man hath ascended up into heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the son of man, who is in heaven; and the forecited place, I go to prepare a place for you; which seemeth to imply heaven before unfit to receive

John 14. 2. men; and those places, wherein our Lord affirmeth himself to be the gate of the sheep; and, the way to the Father; and that of the Apostle to the Hebrews, con-

John 10. 7. cerning the Patriarchs, and other good men before Christ's Incarnation; And these all having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise, God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be perfect. Hi-

Heb. 11. 39. ther also they referred that of the Psalmist, Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lift up ye everlasting doors, and the King of glory shall come in; which words

Psal. 24. 7, 9. they interpreted to signifie the gates of Heaven then to have been first opened, when our Lord did ascend thither. Joshua (a most congruous type of our Lord) leading God's people into the land of promise, did also to their sense imply our

Lord's first entring into Heaven. The High Priest alone entring into the Sanctuary, did, as they deemed, argue the same; the Apostle to the Hebrews seeming much to favour their sentiment, when he saith, Into the second (Tabernacle) went the High Priest alone once every year not without blood, which he offered for himself, and the errors of the people; the Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the Holiest of all was not yet made manifest, whilst the first tabernacle was yet standing. The same also was (say they) signified by those persons, who for offences wide of ma-

Numb. 35. 28. lice, were detained in the cities of refuge, and prohibited to return home until the

the death of the High Priest, but were afterward restored to the land of their possession; thereby, say they, being intimated, that until after our Saviour's death, no man could return into Paradise, his primitive home, from which man for his sin had been excluded; but that henceforth all persons, in an Evangelical account, not malicious or wicked, had a right and liberty to return thither. Upon these and the like grounds did the *Fathers* commonly suppose no person before our Lord's ascension to have entered heaven; but however it were as to the time, yet assuredly in order of nature and causality it was he that did first ascend thither, and by virtue of his ascension it is, that any man ever did or shall ever come thither: *His blood was* (as S. Hierom saith) *the key of Paradise*, the efficacy of which he carrying up with him did unlock it, so that thenceforth it doth stand wide open to those who can fore up thither, following his steps in persevering obedience: *Having therefore* (saith the Apostle to the Hebrews) *boldness to enter into the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say his flesh; and having a High Priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart — and, He being* (perfected, or consummated in his state of glory) *became to all that obey him the Author of everlasting salvation; being designated by God a High Priest after the order of Melchisedec.*

Quid est quod homicida post mortem Pontificis absolutus ad terram propriam redit? nisi quod humanum genus, quod peccando sibi mortem intulit, post mortem veri sacerdotis, id est Christi, peccatorum vinculis solvitur, Et in paradisi possessionem reparatur. Greg. M. Hom. in Ezech.

Sanguis Christi est clavis paradisi. Hier. Ep. 129.

Heb. 10. 19.

Heb. 5. 9.

5. It was indeed an effect of our Lord's ascension and glorification, that all good Christians are with him in a sort translated into heaven, and advanced into a glorious state; being thence by him made *Kings and Priests to God*. *We have* (saith Tertullian) *in Christ Jesus seized on heaven; and the Apostle saith as much: Us* (saith he) *who were dead in trespasses and sins, God hath quickned together with Christ, and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places, in Christ Jesus.* In many respects we thereby are raised to heaven and eminent glory.

Apoc. 1. 6.
1. 10.
Ursurpavimus celum, Et regnum Dei in Christo Jesu.
Tert. de Res. c. 31.

We thence even as men become greatly dignified, our nature being so highly advanced thereby: we thereby get the honour of being brethren or kinsmen to the world's great Lord and King; so that any of us may say with S. Austin, *Where my flesh reigns, there I believe my self to reign*: hence, as the Apostle to the Hebrews teacheth us, is that of the Psalmist verified concerning man; *Thou hast crowned him with glory and honour, and hast set him over the works of thy hands.*

Ubi caro mea regnat, ibi me regnare credo. Aug. Med.

Psal. 8. 5.
Heb. 2. 7.

We also more as Christians are elevated thereby by our near relation to him, and our participation with him as our head: for where the head is, there the body is; they are inseparably connected, there can be no breach, no distance between them; and the honour confer'd on the head, doth necessarily accrue to the members; according to S. Paul's rule; *If one member be glorified, all the members do rejoyce with it, or do partake of its joyful state.* *Christi ascensio nostra est proventus, The ascension of Christ is our preferment; and whether the Glory of the head is gone before, thither likewise is the hope of the body called,* saith a devout Father.

Ἐνθεν ἡ κεφαλὴ, ἐκεῖ καὶ τὸ σῶμα. ὁ δὲ κύριος μέσσω δειρῆσαι ἡ κεφαλὴ καὶ τὸ σῶμα. Chryl. in Ep. 1. 3.

1 Cor. 12. 26.

Christi ascensio nostra est proventus; Et quo praeceffit gloria capitis, eo spei vocatur Et corporis. Leo P.

We also are by our Lord's glorification advanced and advantaged, in that his being so glorified is a sure pledg and an earnest of that glorious reward, which all good Christians shall receive. *Christ* being made heir of all things, did in his ascension, *adire hereditatem*, take possession of that inheritance, and we consequently as co-heirs with him; and having a share in the inheritance of the Saints in light, do sieze thereon, acquiring therein a right and propriety at present, being assured in due time (if by our miscarriages we do not forfeit our title) of an actual possession thereof: *As* (saith Tertullian) *Christ did leave to us, the earnest of the Spirit, so he received from us the earnest of the flesh, and carried it into heaven as a pledg of the whole sum to be sometime brought in thither.*

Heb. 1. 2.
Rom. 8. 17.
Eph. 1. 11.
Col. 1. 12.

Quemadmodum Christus nobis arrhabonem Spiritus reliquit, ita Et a nobis arrhabonem carnis accepit, Et venit in celum pignus totius summae illius quandoque redigenda. Tertull. de Resurr. c. 51.

We do also in a manner ascend with Christ to heaven, in regard that by his ascension our principal concerns, our only considerable interests (that *καρπὸς καὶ μέσσω*, better and enduring substance) the true objects of our affection, and all our hope are transferred thither; whence heaven becometh our only true country,

Heb. 10. 34.

Heb. 13. 14. 1 Pet. 2. 11. 1. 17.
2 Cor. 5. 6.

Phil. 3. 20. Eph. 2. 19. Heb. 12.
22.

Περισσοληγες/Σαμην.

Colof. 1. 13. 1 Thes. 2. 1, 2.
Colof. 1. 5. Gal. 6. 14. 2. 20.
Col. 3. 3.

country, our *abiding city*, our real home : We having here no true rest, no settled mansion, no certain estate ; but indeed being *strangers, sojourners, and pilgrims upon earth*. Our πολιτευμα, our politick capacity relates to heaven, or we are citizens thereof, saith S. Paul ; we are *fellow-citizens of the saints, and domesticks of God* ; are *Profelyties to mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the metropolis of the saints, the heavenly Jerusalem* ; we are *translated into the kingdom of God's beloved Son, are called into his kingdom and glory, have our hope laid up for us in heaven, are dead to the world, and*

our life is hid with Christ in God : and where we are so concerned, there especially in spirit and heart we may be supposed to be.

6. I might add, that God did thus advance our Saviour to declare the special regard he beareth to piety, righteousness and obedience, by his so amply rewarding, and highly dignifying the practice thereof : *We* (saith the *Apostle*) *see Jesus for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honour* : We see him, not only as an object of our contemplation, but as a pattern of our practice, and as a ground of our encouragement ; *Looking up* (saith that *Apostle* again) *unto Jesus the captain and the perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of God* : God it seemeth did intend, and he doth propound our Lord's exaltation for an engagement and motive to us of following him in the way by which he attained it ; giving us assuredly to hope for the like rewards of glory and joy, in proportion answerable to our imitation of his exemplary obedience and patience.

Such are the principal ends and effects of our Lord's ascension, and session at God's right hand ; the consideration of which points may have great use, and should have much influence upon our practice.

1. It may serve to guard us from divers errors, which to the dangerous prejudice and disparagement of our Religion (introducing into it notions thwarting reason and sense, charging it with needless and groundless incredibilities, exposing it to difficulties and objections so massy, that the foundations of Christian truth are scarce able to support them) have been, and are asserted by divers persons, or by sects of men professing Christianity, such as are that of the old *Entychians*, who held that the humane nature of our Lord was converted into his Divinity, or swallowed up thereby ; that of the *German Ubiquitaries*, who say, that our Lord according to his humane nature corporally doth exist every where ; that of the *Lutheran Consubstantialists*, and of the *Roman Transubstantiators*, who affirm, that the body of our Lord is here upon earth at once present in many places (namely in every place where the *Host* is kept, or the *Eucharist* is celebrated) which assertions by the right understanding of these points will appear to be false. For our Lord did visibly in humane shape ascend to Heaven (which to do is inconsistent with the invisible, omnipresent and immoveable nature of God) and therefore he continueth still a man ; and as such he abideth in heaven, and therefore he doth not exist every where, or other-where. It is the property of a Creature to have a definite existence, or to be only in one place at one time ; for could it be in divers places at once, it might by like reason be in any, or in every place, and consequently it might be immense ; nor can we conceive a thing to be at once in several distant places, without its being multiplied in essence ; it especially is repugnant to the nature of a body at once to possess several places, seeing its substance and quantity do not really differ, or are inseparably combined, whence it cannot be multiplied in dimensions, answerable to many localities, without being multiplied in substance ; wherefore since our Lord as man did by a proper local motion ascend, pass through, and enter into the heavens (being, as it is said in *Holy Scripture*, in the visible form and dimensions of his body, *taken, carried, lifted up, gone into heaven, parting from his Disciples, going away from us, leaving the world and going to the Father* ; being where no man here can come, or can follow him, being to be no more in the world, so that we have him not always with us ; being there, where we being in the Body, are absent from him ; seeing he doth now reside in heaven, which must (as S. Peter affirmed) *receive* (or hold) him, *until the restitution of all things* :

Heb. 9. 24.
4. 14.
Acts 1. 2, 9,
10, 11.
Luke 24. 50,
51.

Mark 16. 19.
Matth. 26. 11. 1 Pet. 3. 22.
John 16. 5, 7. 14. 25. 13. 3.
7. 33, 34. 8. 21. 13. 36. 17. 11.
2 Cor. 5. 6.
Οὐ δεῖ ἕνα διδόναι τὸν ἑαυτοῦ. Acts 3. 21.

things : where he constantly *appeareth in God's presence for us*, and *ever liveth to make intercession for us* ; whence also we do expect that in the like visible manner as he went, that he shall come again, *descending* (as *S. Paul* speaketh) *from heaven*, and *coming in the clouds of heaven*, at the last resurrection and judgment, which is therefore commonly termed his *presence*, and *appearance* here). Since, I say, according to the tenour of *Scripture*, our Lord did thus as man in his flesh go into heaven, and there perpetually doth abide in glory, until he shall thence return hither to judge the world, we must not suppose him to be any where corporally upon earth : He is indeed every where by his divinity present with us ; he is also in his humanity present to our faith, to our memory, to our affection, he is therein also present by mysterious representation, by spiritual efficacy, by general inspection, and influence upon his Church ; but *in body*, as we are *absent from him*, so is he likewise separated from us ; we *must depart hence*, that we may be with him, in the place whither he is gone to *prepare for us* : Who shall ascend into heaven to bring Christ down thence ? saith *S. Paul*, intimating where he doth immoveably abide, in exclusion to all other places. These things (beside many other strong reasons) if we do consider, it will suffice to guard us from those rampant absurdities, which so long with such impudence, and such violence have outbraved plain reason and sense : But to leave this, and to come to more practical applications.

2. Is Christ ascended, and advanced to this glorious eminency at God's right hand ? then let us answerably behave our selves toward him, rendring him the honour and worship, the fear and reverence, the service and obedience suitable, and due to that his state. In regard hereto all the *Angels of God* are commanded to adore him, and they willingly submit thereto, acknowledging him to deserve the highest worship ; Every creature ('tis in the *Revelation*) *in heaven, in earth, and under the earth*, doth in its way send up acclamations of blessing and praise unto him : And shall we then refuse, or neglect to do the like ? we who of all creatures in equity and gratitude are most obliged, who in reason and interest are most concerned to honour him, as our selves receiving most honour and advantage from his exaltation ? Shall we be backward in yielding obedience to him, who is in nature so nearly related to us, and in affection so well disposed toward us ; who out of tender good-will toward us, hath undertaken this high charge, and exerciseth it with design to do us good ; who therefore especially is pleased to sit at the helm, that he may protect us from all the enemies of our welfare, and that he may settle us in the enjoyment of happiness ? Shall we dare to oppose his will, and not dread to displease him, to whom *all power in heaven and earth is given* ; whose will is executed by the irresistible right hand of God ; who therefore can easily check us in our bad courses, and will surely chastise us for our disobedience. We do plainly hereby incur the heinous guilt, and shall surely undergo the grievous punishment of rebellion ; this being the sentence, which refusing subjection to him, we shall one day hear, and feel ; *Those mine enemies, that would not have me reign over them, bring them hither, and slay them before me.*

3. These points do afford ground and matter of great joy and comfort to us : Have we not cause to rejoyce, that our Lord hath obtained so absolute and glorious a victory over all our cruel enemies ? Should we not with joyful gratulation applaud the triumphs of goodness over wickedness, of charity over malice, of mercy over wrath, of life and happiness over death and misery ? Is it not matter of huge satisfaction, that one of our kind and kindred, who beareth toward us the bowels of a man, and the affection of a brother, who hath yielded so wonderful expressions of good-will and charity toward us, who so loved us, as to lay down his life for us, is raised to such preferment ? Shall we not be pleased, that we have so good a friend in so high place, and so great power ; or that he who is so willing, is also so able to do us good ? Have we not great cause to acquiesce in our subjection to so just, so mild, so gracious a Governour ; *the sceptre of whose Kingdom is a right sceptre, whose yoke is easy, and burden light* ? Shall we not be glad, considering, that we have so merciful, and so kind an intercessor

Heb. 7. 25. 9. 24.

Acts 1. 11. 1 Thess. 4. 16. 1. 10.
2 Thess. 1. 7. 1 Cor. 15. 47.
Phil. 1. 20. Apoc. 1. 7.
Matth. 24. 30.
(Εἰς ἀπείρην αἰώνων. 1 Thess. 4. 17.)
Παρουσία. Ἐμφάνεια.

Secundum majestatem suam, secundum providentiam, secundum ineffabilem & invisibilem gratiam impletur quod ab eo dictum est, Ecce ego vobiscum — secundum carnem verò — non semper habebitis me vobiscum. Aug. in Joh. Tract. 50.

2 Cor. 5. 6.
Phil. 1. 23.
1 Thess. 4. 17.
Rom. 10. 6.

Heb. 1. 6.

Apoc. 5. 12, 13.

Matt. 28. 18.

Luke 19. 27.

always resident with God, always ready to do good offices for us at the throne of Grace? Considering this, what is there that can be, or happen in the world, that should displease, discourage, or disturb us? What enemies should we fear, since all our enemies lie prostrate under his feet? What good can we fear to want, since all things are at his disposal, and all good is dispensed by him? What events should trouble us, since all things are managed and ordered by his good hand? Will he suffer any thing to hurt us? Will he see us need any convenience? Will he let us be oppressed by any mischief or distress, whose office it is, and continual care to protect and succour us? Have we not, in contemplation of these things, abundant reason to comply with that precept, *of rejoicing in the Lord always?* Be our case in this world what it will, considering where our Lord is, we have great cause to be cheerful, according to that injunction of our Lord, enforced by this consideration: *In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.*

Phil. 4. 4.
3. 1.

John 16. 33.

4. The consideration of these things serveth to cherish and strengthen all kind of faith and hope in us. If the resurrection of our Saviour might beget in us a strong persuasion concerning the truth of our Lord's doctrine, and a lively hope of salvation from his undertakings and performances for us, his ascension and session in glory (confirmed by the same indubitable testimonies and authorities) must needs nourish, improve and corroborate them. We cannot surely distrust the accomplishment of any promises declared by him, we cannot despair of receiving any good from him, who is ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of divine wisdom and divine power, thence viewing all things done here, thence ordering all things every where for the advantage of those who love him and trust in him.

Tit. 2. 13.

Heb. 6. 19.

It especially doth serve to quicken in us that *blest hope*, as S. Paul calleth it, of a joyful and happy rest after the troubles and sorrows of this wretched life; *which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which en- treth into that within the veil, where the forerunner is for us entred, even Jesus, made an High Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.*

Heb. 4. 16.

Mat. 21. 22.

7. 8.

Mark 11. 24.

1 John 5. 14.

John 14. 13.

15. 7. 16. 23.

5. These points do likewise serve to excite and encourage our devotion; for having such a Mediator in heaven, so near God's presence, so much in God's favour, having so good and sure a friend at court, having such a *master of requests* ever ready to present up, to recommend and to further our petitions, what should deter, what should any-wise withhold us from cheerfully, upon all occasions, by him addressing our selves to God? We may therefore, as we are exhorted by the *Apostle, come to the throne of grace with boldness, that we may receive mercy, and find grace for seasonable aid.* We cannot, considering this, any-wise doubt of those promises being effectually made good to us: *Whatever ye shall ask in prayer believing, ye shall receive: Whatsoever ye ask in my name, that will I do:* There is nothing, which he enjoying such power cannot do for us; and there is nothing which he our loving and merciful brother will not do that is good for us, if we do with humble confidence apply our selves to him for it: And what greater incitement can there be to devotion, than an assurance so firmly grounded of fair acceptance and happy success thereof? yea, what an extreme folly, what a huge crime is it not to make use of such an advantage, not by so obliging an inducement to be moved to a constant practice of this so beneficial, and sweet kind of duties?

Luke 22. 29.

Apoc. 1. 6.
5. 10.

6. It may encourage us to all kind of obedience, to consider what a high pitch of eternal glory and dignity our Lord hath obtained, in regard to his obedience, and as a pledge of like recompence designed to us, if we tread in his footsteps, *running the race that is set before us, and looking up to Jesus, who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, and is set at the right hand of the throne of God.* As God in respect to what he should perform, did offer to him so high a promotion, so doth he likewise upon condition of our obedience to his commandments, oblige him self to put us into a like excellent and happy state; so our Lord himself declared when he said, *I covenant to you a Kingdom, as my Father covenanted to me a Kingdom:* it goeth before, *Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations,* there is the condition, faithful and constant adherence to Christ in doing and suffering, upon performance of which condition our Lord tendereth that glorious reward of an eternal Kingdom: And the divine covenant being

being thus effectually fulfilled unto him, doth ascertain us, that his overture will likewise be made good to us : *It is*, saith S. Paul, *a faithful saying*, (that is, a word upon which we may confidently rely) *if we be dead with him* (dead to sin and vanity) *we shall also live with him* (live with him in glory and joy) *if we endure* (or persevere in obedience and patience after him) *we shall also reign with him*. And, *To him* (saith our Lord in the Revelation) *that overcometh, will I grant to sit with me on my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father on his throne.*

7. Lastly, The consideration of these points should elevate our thoughts and affections from these inferiour things here (the vain and base things of this world) unto heavenly things ; according to that of S. Paul ; *If ye be risen with Christ, seek the things above, where Christ is sitting at the right hand of God.* To the head of our body we should be joyn'd, continually deriving sense and motion, direction and activity from him : where the master of our family is, there should our minds be, constantly attentive to his pleasure, and ready to serve him ; where the city is, whose denizons we are, and where our final rest must be, there should our thoughts be, careful to observe the laws and orders, that we may enjoy the immunities and privileges thereof : In that country, where only we have any good estate, or valuable concernment, there our mind should be studying to secure and improve our interest therein : our resolution should be conformable to that of the Holy Psalmist, *I will lift up mine eyes to the hills from whence cometh my help.* Christ is our life, saith S. Paul ; And shall our souls be parted from our life ? Christ (saith he again) *is our hope* ; And shall our mind and hope be asunder ? Christ is the principal object of our love, of our trust, of our joy, of all our best affections ; And shall our affections be severed from their best objects ? By his being in heaven all our treasure becometh there ; *and where our treasure is, there* (if we apprehend and believe rightly, there naturally) *our hearts will be also* : if they be not, 'tis a sign we take him not for our best treasure. *We do in our bodies sojourn from the Lord*, as S. Paul saith ; but in our spirits we may, and should be ever present, ever conversant with him ; contemplating him with an eye of faith, fastning our love upon him, reposing our confidence in him, directing our Prayers and Thanksgivings to him ; meditating upon his good Laws, his gracious Promises, his holy Life, and his merciful Performances for us. We should not, by fixing our hearts and desires upon earthly things (upon the vain delights, the sordid interests, the fallacious and empty glories, the sinful enjoyments here) nor by a dull and careless neglect of heavenly things, avert, estrange, or separate our selves wholly from him. No, *fursum conda*, let us, unloosing our hearts from these things, and with them soaring upward, follow and adhere to our Lord ; so shall we anticipate that blessed future State, so shall we assure to our selves the possession of heaven ; so here enjoying our Lord in affection, we shall hereafter obtain a perfect fruition of his glorious and blisful presence ; the which God of his mercy by his grace vouchsafe us, through the same our ever blessed Saviour, to whom be for ever all glory and praise. *Amen.*

O God the King of Glory, who hast exalted thine own Son Jesus Christ with great triumph unto thy Kingdom in Heaven ; we beseech thee leave us not comfortless, but send thine Holy Ghost to comfort us, and exalt us to the same place, whither our Saviour Christ is gone before ; who liveth and reigneth with thee, and the Holy Ghost, one God world without end. *Amen.*

From thence He shall come to judg
the quick and the dead.

S E R M O N XXII.

The Reasonableness and Equity of a Future Judgment.

ECCLES. III. 17.

I said in my heart, God shall judg the righteous and the wicked.

Eccles. I. 13.



THESE words are the result of a serious contemplation upon the state of human affairs, and common occurrences in this world: the Royal Philosopher having (as he telleth us) *given his heart to seek, and search out by wisdom concerning all things, that were done under heaven*; what was the proper nature, what the just price of each thing; what real benefit or solid comfort each did afford; how every person did fare in the pursuit, and success of his designs; did, after full examination, and careful balancing all things, resolve upon such conclusions as these,

1. 8. 2. 11. That no kind of undertaking here did in effect yield any considerable profit, or compleat satisfaction, but all in the issue did prove vain and vexatious.

2. 11. 9. 11. That no man from his care and industry, in any course of life, could promise himself any certain success, or reap answerable reward.

2. 13. That although between wisdom and folly (or between goodness and wickedness) there is some intrinsic difference of worth (*one excelling the other, as light doth excell darkness*) yet as to external advantages, and as to final event here,

2. 15. 7. 15. there is no great odds discernable; for that events (prosperous and adverse) did appear to fall out, not according to the qualifications, or to the practices of men,

9. 1. 11. but indifferently, according to the swinge of *time and chance*, and for that death and oblivion alike do seize upon all, so that apparently in that respect, *a man hath no preeminence over a beast*.

2. 24. 3. 12. That in common life nothing doth appear better, than for a man with the best advantage he can, to enjoy ordinary sensible delights and comforts, which his condition doth afford.

4. 2. 3. That in regard to the present things here, life were not desirable to any man, the inconveniences and troubles thereof outweighing its benefits; so that even the wisest, greatest and happiest persons (such as he himself was) had cause to *hate life, and all their labour which they had taken under the sun*.

5. 11. 8. 17. That the mind and affection of God toward men are very reserved; the course of providence very abstruse, the reason of events unsearchable to the wit or study of men; so that we can hardly from appearances here descry any conspicuous marks of God's favour, or his displeasure.

From these observations, as from so many arguments, he doth both here and otherwhere in several places of this *Book* infer, that there shall be a divine judgment, passing upon all men, both righteous and wicked; whereby these seeming incongruities in the providential administration of things shall be salved; and in

regard whereto our present opinions of things may be rectified : this he interposeth here, *I said in my heart* (that is, by the consideration of things I was persuaded) *that God shall judg the righteous and the wicked* ; this he ever now and then toucheth as incident to his meditations ; this he in the close of all proposeth as the grand inducement to piety, and obedience to God's commandments : *For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.* Eccles. 2. 14.

This judgment he expresseth indefinitely, so as not to determine the kind or time thereof ; and as to the absolute force of his words, it may signifie the decree of God, to reward or punish men here in this life according to their deserts, the which in holy Scripture is commonly stiled God's judgment : but the force of his arguments (or at least of some of them) plainly doth infer a future judgment after death ; and so therefore I shall take his sense to be, grounding thereon this *observation*, That from a wise consideration of humane affairs, and obvious events here, we may collect the reasonableness, the equity, the expediency, the moral or prudential necessity of a future judgment, according to which men shall receive due recompences, answerable to their demeanour in this life. This observation it shall be my endeavour by God's help to declare, and prove by arguments deduced from the reason and nature of things.

First, then I say, it is reasonable and equal that there should be a future judgment ; this will appear upon many accounts.

1. Seeing all men come hither without any knowledge or choice, having their life as it were, obtruded on them ; and seeing ordinarily (according to the general complaints of men) the pains of this life do over-balance its pleasures ; so that it seemeth, in regard to what men find here, a punishment to be born ; it seemeth also thence equal, that men should be put into a capacity, upon their good behaviour in this troublesome state, of a better state hereafter, in compensation for what they endure here ; otherwise God might seem not to have dealt fairly with his creatures, and we might have some colour to expostulate with *Job* ; *Wherefore is light given to him that is in misery, and life to the bitter in soul ? Why dyed I not from the womb ? Why did I not give up the Ghost, when I came out of the belly ?*

Vitam non meretricule quisquam accepisset, nisi daretur inficis. Sen. ad Marc. 22.

Nemini contigit impunè nasci. Sen. ad Marc. 15.

Eccles. 4. 3, 4. 2. 17.
Job 3. 3. 15. 10.
Jer. 20. 14. &c.

Wherefore is light given to him that is in misery, and life to the bitter in soul ? Why dyed I not from the womb ? Why did I not give up the Ghost, when I came out of the belly ? Job. 3. 20, 11.

2. Seeing man is endued with a free choice, and power over his actions, and thence by a good or bad use thereof is capable of deserving well or ill, it is just that a respective difference be made, according to due estimation ; and that men answerably should be proceeded with either here or hereafter, reaping the fruits of what they voluntarily did sow. There is a natural relation between merits and rewards, which must come under taxation, and find effect, otherwise there would be no such thing as justice and injustice in the world.

Job 4. 8.
Prov. 22. 8.
Jer. 32. 19.

3. Seeing there is a natural subordination of man to God, as of a creature to his Maker, as of a subject or servant to his Lord, as of a client or dependent to his Patron, Protector and Benefactor, whence correspondent obligations do result ; it is just that men should be accountable for the performance, and for the violation or neglect of them ; so as accordingly either to receive approbation, or to be obliged to render satisfaction ; respectively as they have done right, and payed respect to God, or as they have offered to wrong and dishonour him ; otherwise those relations would seem vain and idle.

4. Seeing also there are natural relations of men to one another, and frequent transactions between them, founding several duties of humanity and justice ; the which may be observed or transgressed ; so that some men shall do, and others suffer much injury, without any possible redress from other-where, it is fit that a reference of such cases should be made to the common patron of right, and that by him they should be so decided, that due amends should be made to one party, and fit correction inflicted on the other ; according to that of S. Paul ; *It is a righteous thing with God to recompence tribulation to them that trouble you, and to you who are troubled rest with us in the revelation of our Lord Jesus.* 2 Thes. 1. 6.

5. Whereas also there are many secret good actions, many inward good dispositions, good wishes, and good purposes, unto which here no honour, no profit, no pleasure, no sort of benefit is annexed, or indeed well can be (they being in-

dis-

discernable to men) there are likewise many bad practises, and designs' concealed; or disguised, so as necessarily to pass away without any check, any disgrace, any damage or chastisement here: it is most equal that hereafter both these kinds should be disclosed, and obtain answerable recompence.

6. There are also persons, whom, although committing grievous wrong, oppression, and other heinous misdemeanours, offensive to God and man, yet, by reason of the inviolable sacredness of their authority, or because of their uncontrollable power, no justice here can reach, nor punishment can touch; who therefore should be reserved to the impartial, and irresistible judgment of God; and fit it is, that (for satisfaction of justice, and distinction of such from those, who contrariwise behave themselves well) a *Tophet* should be prepared for them.

IIa. 30. 33.

7. Upon these and the like accounts equity requireth, that a judgment should pass upon the deeds of men; and thereto the common opinions of men, and the private dictates of each man's conscience do attest: for all men seeing any person to demean himself brutishly and unworthily, committing heinous disorders and outrages, are apt to pronounce it unfit, that such an one should escape with impunity; likewise when innocent and good persons (who do no harm, and do what good they can) do suffer, or do enjoy no benefit thence, it is a pity, will any indifferent person be ready to say, that such a man's case should not be considered; that some reparation, or some reward should not be allotted to him: the which apprehensions of men are in effect the verdicts of common sense concerning the equity of a judgment to be.

8. Every man also having committed any notable misdemeanour (repugnant to piety, justice, or sobriety) doth naturally accuse himself for it, doth in his heart sentence himself to deserve punishment, and doth stand possessed with a dread thereof; so, even unwillingly, avouching the equity of a judgment, and by a forcible instinct prefaging it to come. As likewise he that hath performed any virtuous or honest action, doth not only rest satisfied therein, but hath raised in him a strong hope of benefit to come from heaven in recompence thereof: the which apprehensions, and hopes do involve an opinion, that it is reasonable a judgment should be. All which considerations (seeing it is manifest that there is not generally or frequently any such exact judgment, or dispensation of rewards in this life, nor perhaps without changing the whole frame of things, and course of providence, can well be) do therefore infer the fitness, and equity of a future judgment.

It is farther, upon divers accounts, requisite and needful, that men should have an apprehension concerning such a judgment appointed by God, and consequently that such an one should really be. It is requisite toward the good conduct of humane affairs here; or to engage men to the practice of virtue: It is necessary to the maintaining any belief concerning Religion, or sense of piety; without it therefore no convenient Society among men can be well upheld.

1. It is, I say, needful to engage men upon the practice of any virtue, and to restrain them from any vice; for that indeed without it, no consideration of reason, no provision of law here, can be much available to those purposes. He that will consider the nature of men, or observe their common practice (marking what apprehensions usually steer them, what inclinations sway them, in their elections and pursuits of things) shall, I suppose, find, that from an invincible principle of self-love, or sensuality, deriving it self through all their motions of soul, and into all their actions of life, men generally do so strongly propend to the enjoyment of present sensible goods, that nothing but a presumption of some considerable benefit to be obtained by abstinence from them, or of some grievous mischief consequent on the embracing them, can withhold them from pursuing such enjoyment. From hence (seeing fancy, reason and experience do all prompt men to a foresight of events, and force them to some regard of the consequences of things) it followeth, that hope and fear are the main springs, which set on work all the wheels of humane action: so that any matter being propounded, if men can hope, that it will yield pleasant, or profitable (that is, tending to pleasant) fruits, they will undertake it; if they do fear its consequences will be distasteful, or hurtful, they will decline it: very rare it is to find, that the love or liking of a thing, as in it self amiable to the mind, or suitable to reason, doth incline men thereto; that honest things, bare of present advantages, and barren of hopeful fruits,

fruits, are heartily pursued; that any thing otherwise averteth us from it self, than as immediately presenting some mischief, or dangerously threatening it. When goodness therefore doth clash with interest or pleasure, *humane wisdom* Rom. 8. 6. (the *σώφρων τῆς σαρκός*, *natural sense of the flesh*, which S. Paul speaketh of, as opposite to virtue) will dispose men to take part with these, and except some higher aid come in to succour goodness, 'tis odds, that ever they will prevail over it. If it do appear, that virtue can pay men well for their pains, they perhaps may be her Servants; but they will hardly wait on her in pure courtesie, or work in her service for nothing; if she bringeth visibly a good dowry with her, she may be courted; but her mere beauty, or worth will draw few suitors to her. Who will forego sensible pleasures, or wave substantial profit? who will reject the overtures of power, or honour, for her sake? And if vice, how ill soever it look or lear, do offer fairly, how many persons will be so nice, or squeamish, as merely out of fancy, or in despiht, to her to refuse or renounce her? In short, as men are bated with pleasure, or bribed with profit, so they pursue; as they are stung with pain, or curb'd with fear, so they eschew things: it is a *gift* (or a specious appearance of some good offered) which perpetually moveth the greatest part, which often *blindeth the eyes, and perverteth the heart* of the wisest sort of men. Deut. 16. 19. Exod. 23. 8.

It is farther to common sense very obvious, that this life cannot promise, or afford to virtue any rewards apparently so considerable, as in the common judgment of men to overpoise the pains and difficulties required to the procurement and maintenance thereof (the pains and difficulties to be overcome in mastering stubborn inclinations, in moderating greedy appetites, in restraining violent passions, in encountering frequent and strong temptations, in abstracting our minds and affections from sensible things, in assiduous watching over our thoughts, words and actions) together with the manifold inconveniences, crosses and troubles, which do attend the strict practice of virtue; that likewise here there are not ordinarily any such discouragements affixed to vice, which do much weigh down the pleasures with which it is tempered, and the advantages waiting on it.

As for human laws, made to encourage and requite virtue, or to check and chastise vice, it is also manifest that they do extend to cases in comparison very few; and that even as to particulars, which they touch, they are so easily eluded, or evaded, that without entrenching upon them, at least without incurring their edg, or coming within the verge of their correction, men may be very bad in themselves, extreamly injurious to their neighbours, and hugely troublesome to the world; so that such laws hardly can make tolerable citizens, much less thoroughly good men, even in exterior demeanour and dealing. However, no laws of men can touch internal acts of virtue or vice; they may sometimes bind our hands, or bridle our mouths, or shackle our feet, but they cannot stop our Thoughts, they cannot still our passions, they cannot bend or break our inclinations; these things are beyond the reach of their cognizance, of their command, of their compulsion, or their correction; they cannot therefore render men truly good, or hinder them from being bad.

Upon which and the like considerations, it is plain enough, that setting aside the persuasion of a future judgment, all other incentives to virtue and restraints from vice, which either common experience suggesteth, or Philosophical speculation may devise, are very weak and faint, and cannot reasonably promise considerable effect: the native beauty, and intrinsic worth of virtue; or its suitability to reason, and the dignity of our nature; the grace and commendation with which it decketh the practisers of it; its goodly, pleasant and wholesome fruits of manifold conveniences of health to soul and body, of peace and amity among men, of tranquillity and satisfaction in mind, if they do not reach beyond this transitory life, cannot to the common apprehensions of men appear so considerable, or prove so efficacious, as to engage men closely and constantly to adhere thereto. Neither will the worst of evils innate or accessory to vice (its essential deformity and turpitude, or its being disagreeable to reason, and dishonourable to human nature, together with the distempers, the damages, the disgraces, the disturbances apt to sprout from it) if no more hereafter is to be feared in consequence thereof, be sufficient to deter or discourage men from it: the peril of death it self (the worst evil which men pretend to inflict, and that which our nature seemeth most

to abhor) will not import much toward the diverting indigent, ambitious, or passionate men from the most desperately wicked attempts; it is the observation of Cicero, from which he inferreth the need of supposing future punishments, as the

Ut aliqua in vita formido improbis esset, apud inferos ejusmodi quædam illi antiqui supplicia impiis constituta esse voluerunt, quod videlicet intelligebant his remotis non esse mortem ipsam pertimescendam. Cic. Catil. 4.

only effectual restraints from such actions. *That, saith he, there might be in this life some fear laid upon wicked men, those ancients did think good that there should be some punishments appointed in hell for impious persons; because indeed they understood, that setting these apart, death it self was not to be feared.*

Cic. de Fin. 3. Tus. 5.

There have been indeed vented such fine and stately notions as these; that Reason simply, however attended, doth challenge obedience to it self; that Virtue is abundantly its own reward, and Vice a compleat punishment to it self; that

Cic. de Leg. 1. Sen. de Clem. 1. 1.

we should not in our practice be mercenary, regarding what profit or detriment will accrue from it, but should be good absolutely and gratis; that moral goods are the only desirable goods, and moral evils the only evils to be grieved at; that nothing can happen amiss to good men, and whatever their condition is they are

Neque bona, neque mala quæ vulgus putet; multos qui confidit adversis videntur beatos, ac plerisque quanquam magnas per opes miserrimos, si illi gravem fortunam constantiter tolerant, hi prosperâ inconsultè utantur. Tac. Ann. 6.

perfectly happy; that nothing can truly benefit ill men, or exempt them from misery. But these, and the like notions, frequently occurring in *Philosophers*, as they are (being rightly understood, or taken in a qualified sense) supposing Religion and a future Judgment, evidently reasonable and true (as also perhaps, even abstracting from that supposition, they

may have in them a kind of slim and dusky truth, discernable to one in a thousand, who is very sharp-sighted, and looketh most wistly on them; as they may be relished by a few persons of very refined spirit, or of special improvement) so to the common herd of people (unto whose inclinations and capacities, it is fit that the general rules of practice, and the most effectual inducements thereto should be squared) to men, immersed in the cares, the toils, and the temptations of the world, they plainly are unfutable; their grosser conceit cannot apprehend, their more rugged disposition will not admit such fine notions; they in effect, by the generality of men, have been slighted and exploded as incongruous to common sense and experience, as the dictates of affectation or simplicity; as the dreams of idle persons, addicted to speculation, and regardless of the world, such as it really doth exist, and will ever persist, while men continue endued with the same natural inclinations, and affections: so that from such notions little succour can be expected toward promoting Virtue, or restraining Vice in the world.

Upon these considerations the necessity, or great usefulness of supposing a Judgment doth appear; that it being cast into the scales may to the common understanding of men evidently render Virtue more considerable and eligible than Vice; as even in consequential profit and pleasure far surpassing it.

2. Whence manifestly the same supposition is also needful for the welfare of

Deos agere curam rerum humanarum, ex usu vita est; pœnasque maleficii, aliquando feras, nunquam autem irritas esse, &c. Plin. 11. 7.

humane society; the which, without the practice of justice, fidelity, and other virtues, can hardly subsist; without which practice indeed, a body of men would be worse than a company of wolves or foxes; and vain it were to think, that

it can any where stand without conscience; and conscience, without fear checking, or hope spurring it on, can be no more than a name: all societies therefore we see have been fain to call in the notion of a future Judgment to the aid of justice, and support of fidelity; obliging men to bind their testimonies by oaths, and plight their troth by Sacraments; implying a dread of that divine judgment, to which they solemnly do then appeal, and make themselves accountable.

3. But farther, the persuasion concerning a future judgment, is upon peculiar accounts, most requisite to the support of Religion, and defence of Piety.

It is certain, that no authority, upon whatever reason or equity grounded, if it do not present competent encouragements to obedient subjects, if it do not hold forth an armed hand, menacing chastisement to the refractory, will signify any thing, or be able to sustain the respect due to it; that no laws, however in themselves equal or commodious, if a certain account or trial, back'd with a dispensation of valuable rewards, and infliction of formidable punishments, be not annexed to them, will obtain any force, so as to be observed or regarded; that

no obligation whatever, of duty or gratitude, will prevail upon men, if they do not apprehend themselves under a constraint, to render an account, so as to be forced either to do reason, or to suffer for not doing it; so it is generally; and so it is even in regard to God, the Sovereign King and Governour of the world, as piety doth suppose him; his authority will never be maintained, his laws will never be obeyed, the duties towards him will never be minded, without influence upon the hopes and fears of men; they will not yield to him any reverence, they will no-wise regard his commands, if they may not from their respect and obedience expect good benefit, if they dread not a sore vengeance for their rebellion or neglect; nothing to them will seem more fond, than to serve him, who doth not well requite for the performance, than to revere him, who doth not soundly punish for the neglect of his service.

Forasmuch also as piety doth require duties somewhat high and hard, as much crossing the natural inclinations and desires of men, it peculiarly for the over-ruling such aversion, doth need answerably great encouragements to the practice, and determents from the transgression of what it requireth; upon which score it may also farther appear, that temporal judgments and recompences here are not sufficient to procure a due obedience to the laws of piety; for how indeed can he that for the sake of piety doth undergo disgrace, loss, or pain, expect to be satisfied here? What other benefits can he presume upon beside those, which he doth presently forfeit?

Of this particular God may seem designedly to have set before us a pregnant instance or experiment, worthy our consideration: God in a very notorious and affecting manner declared his will and law to the *Jews*; and to engage them to obedience, he not only recommended it to them as very good in it self, and very convenient for them to observe, but he enforced it with promises of the greatest blessings concerning this life, that men are capable of, if they should obey; and with curses or menaces of the most dismal mischiefs imaginable in reference to this life, in case of disobedience; that he both could and would in both respects make his word good, he did by miraculous dispensation of signal mercies and judgments most evidently shew and assure them: Yet what was the effect? it was that (as the *Psalmist* expresseth it) *They despised the pleasant land — and hearken- ed not unto the voice of the Lord; Their heart was not right with God, neither were they stedfast in his covenant; they tempted and provoked the most high God, and kept not his testimonies*: they did not so value those benefits, they could not so dread those penalties, as in regard to them to persist for any time in a steady obedience; as not easily in despite of them to be drawn into the worst of crimes prohibited to them: the sweetest enjoyment of those good things could not hold them close to their duty, nor was the saddest smart of those evils able to reclaim them from sin; but even that very people (we may farther observe) having afterward (by sparks of light darted from the Prophets, or otherwise) obtained some clearer notions, and stronger persuasions concerning a future state, and rewards dispensed therein of higher consideration than any temporal ones here, became thereupon very constant and resolute in observance of their law; they proved valiant and fierce in defence thereof; they chose rather to endure the most grievous afflictions, than to transgress it, as the history of the *Maccabees* doth inform us: they (as the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews* remarked of them) *waxed valiant in fight, and turned to flight the armies of the aliens; they also were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection*; this hope it was, which then did raise them to so vigorous resolution, and so chearful patience. From the same *Apostle* we also learn, that it was a sense of our being here in a transitory state, and having an eye to the recompence of reward after this life, which did engage the good *Patriarchs* and *Prophets* of the *Old Testament* so readily upon all occasions to comply with God's will, and to perform the most difficult commands by him imposed on them: these things they did, *not*, saith the *Apostle*, having indeed received the promises (that is, not having the Evangelical Promises concerning a future life in so formal and express a manner, as we now have proposed to them;) but yet having seen them afar off, and having been persuaded of them, and having embraced them, and having (in declaration of those perceptions and persuasions) confessed that they were *strangers and pilgrims upon earth*.

- The like observation might be made even concerning the *Pagans*, who while the persuasions concerning judgments and rewards after this life were retained in common vogue, did live more innocently and virtuously; but after those generally were discarded, so that the *Satyrists* could say, that scarce boys did believe any Ghosts, or subterraneous Judicatures, then did all wickedness mainly prevail and overflow. Comparing which things we may discern, as the weakness of con-

*Esse aliquos manes, & subterranea
regna
Vix pueri credunt.* Juv. Sat. 2.

derations merely regarding this present life, so the force of those, which concern a future state, in order to the procuring obedience to God's Laws; supposing both entertained with the same faith or persuasion of mind; from whence the necessity of that judgment, which we speak of, toward the maintenance of piety doth appear.

But beyond these things this point is very needful to secure the very foundations of all Religion and Piety, the existence of God, and his providence over human affairs: the belief of a Deity, according to any tolerable notion thereof, and of a providence over us, apt to engage or encourage us to religious performances; without supposition of a judgment, and of a dispensation according to it of future rewards, cannot be well maintained; the objections assailing them would strike too hard, and pierce too deep, were we not furnished with this good shield to receive and repel them.

*Tò πάσιν εἶπας, ἀνδράσδαι θεός.
Eurip.*

- Eccl.* 9. 1, 2. To find that of the *Preacher* certified by experience: *No man knoweth either love or hatred by all that is before him; all things come alike to all; there is one event to the righteous, and to the wicked; to the clean, and to the unclean; to him that sacrificeth, and to him that sacrificeth not: As is the good, so is the sinner; and he that sweareth, as he that sweareth not.*
- To behold virtue groveling on the ground, and trampled on, while vice is mounted on the perch, and sitteth proudly domineering; to view innocence and right sadly groaning under oppression, while fraud and violence do triumph and insult: which sights are obvious in the world, as the *Preacher* observed; *I saw*, said he, *under the sun, the place of judgment, that wickedness was there, and the place of righteousness, that iniquity was there; I considered all the oppressions that are done under the sun; and behold the tears of such as were oppressed; on the side of their oppressors there was power, but they had no comforter.* So did *Job* also take notice, when he said, *The tabernacles of the robbers prosper, and they that provoke God are secure; and the Psalmist complained of wicked oppressors, They are inclosed in their own fit, and with their mouth they speak proudly: and the Prophet Malachy;*
- Mal.* 3. 15. *Now we call the proud happy, yea they that work wickedness are set up, yea they that tempt God are delivered.*

*Sed cum res hominum tantâ caligine
volvi
Adspicerem, latosque diu florere no-
centes
Versarique pios, rursus labefacta cade-
bat
Religio, &c.* Claud. in Ruff. 1. init.

Eccles. 6. 15.

*Dies deficiat si velim numerare, qui-
bus bonis malè evenerit, nec minùs si
commemorem, quibus improbis optimè.* Cic.
de Nat. D. 3.

*Dionysius 30 annos Tyrannus fuit opu-
lentissima, & beatissima civitatis
atque in suo seculo mortuus.* Cic. ib.

To observe it frequently to happen, that most innocent and virtuous persons do conflict all their days with hardships and crosses; and sometime after all die sadly in pain, and under ignominy, while persons most outrageous in lewdness and iniquity do flourish and rant it out in a long undisturbed course of prosperity, and in the end depart hence fairly and quietly; according to that in *Ecclesiastes*; *There is a just man that perisheth in his righteousness; and there is a wicked man that prolongeth his life in wickedness:* the former was the case of *Socrates*, of *Phocion*, of *Regulus*, of many other remarkably gallant and worthy persons; the latter, as *Cicero* observed of *Dionysius*, who after thirty years of unjust and cruel domination, in much splendour, died quietly in his bed.

- Thus, I say, to see and consider, that commonly *to just men it happeneth according to the work of the wicked, and to wicked men according to the work of the righteous* (as the *Preacher* speaketh) that here piety with its best friends do suffer deeply, and impiety with its worst abettors do notably thrive; yea, that not only good men suffer, but often suffer for being good, (from envy and malignity of men that hate goodness) and that bad men not only prosper, but prosper by their wickedness (by their fraud and violence) hath been a huge scandal to religion,

*Improbiorum prosperitates, secundaque
res redarguunt (ut Digenes dicebat)
vim omnem Deorum & potestatem.* Cic.
ibid.

religion, which hath caused many to stumble; hath cast some quite down into the gulf of *Atheism*, or *Epicurism*; hath brought some men to doubt, hath induced others flatly to deny, that there is a God (that is, a most wise, powerful, just and good Being, every where present) or that he being, doth preside over, or any-wise concern himself in our affairs. From this source did flow all those impious conceits, which *Seneca* thus expressed: *One objecteth to the Gods neglect of us; another iniquity; another casts them out beyond his world, and leaves them forlorn as lazy and dull, without any light, or any work.* From hence it hath been, that in all places and times, there have been persons ready to say with those in the *Psalms*, *How doth God know, is there knowledge in the most High? The Lord doth not see, neither doth the God of Jacob regard it; God hath forgotten, he hideth his face, and will never see it.*

And not only upon blind *Pagans* and profane persons, but even upon the most pious of God's people these considerations have made impression, extorting from their hearts and mouths expostulations like that of *Jeremy*: *Wherefore doth the way of the wicked prosper, wherefore are all they happy that deal very treacherously?* And that of *Job*, *Wherefore do the wicked live, become old, and are mighty in power? their seed is established in their sight, their houses are safe from fear, neither is the rod of God upon them—they spend their days in wealth, and in a moment go down to the grave; and that, Is it good unto thee that thou shouldst oppress, that thou shouldst despise the work of thine hand, and shine upon the counsel of the wicked?* Such questions did this kind of observations draw forth, and it shrewdly tempted them to a dissatisfaction in their pious practice, that they were ready to say with the *Psalmist*, *Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency;* or with those in the Prophet, *It is vain to serve God, and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinances, and that we have walked mournfully before the Lord?* so that hence, *their feet were almost gone, and their steps had well nigh slipped into a distrust of God's wise and just providence; they were moved to suspect, that God did not indeed bear that special regard to goodness, and affection to good men, that great hatred of iniquity, and displeasure toward the lovers of it, which religion supposed, as the main grounds of piety: thus, I say, have men, both good and bad, upon such occasions been induced, or tempted to doubt concerning those fundamental points; and that not without apparently weighty cause, admitting that all accounts are made up here in this life, between God and men; or that there is no reckoning behind to be adjusted in another world by divine justice and goodness; then indeed that saying, 'tis a reproach to the Deity that bad men do prosper, and good men suffer, hath a plausible semblance of truth; then he that affirmed, there was no God, and heaven to be a void place, proving his assertion hence, that while he thus affirmed, he found himself in a good case, did argue smartly; then *Diagoras*, from an unpunished perjury, collected probably, that God did not exist, or did not mind what was done here; for that being, and regarding things, he would not have endured himself to be so affronted, and those under his care so abused; then had *Dionysius* some reason to justify his sacrilege by his prosperous navigation from committing it; and with fair colour *Diogenes* might say, that *Harpalus* his successful treachery and rapine, did, *testimonium dicere adversos Deos, bear testimony against the Gods*, as guilty of injustice, or carelessness: these sort of discourses would, I say, upon excluding the supposition of future judgment, have some validity, or speciousness; and for want of that supposition we may observe the Apologies for providence, elaborately composed by some *Philosophers*, to be very lame and unsatisfactory. But supposing a judgment hereafter designed by God, and a proceeding with all men according thereto, all difficulty in these cases vaniseth, all objections have plainly no moment or force: Then God's present conivance, or patient indulgence toward wicked men will signify no more, than*

Ἡ Χρησὶς μὴδὲ ἡγάδου θεός, εἰδὼς δὲ καὶ τὴν δίκην ἀνέρεται. Eurip. El. 8.

Vid. Luc. in Jup. Confut. Plut. de placitis, &c. Plin. 11. 7.

Alius illis objicit negligentiam nostri, alius iniquitatem; alius illos extra mundum suum projicit, & ignavos hebetesque illos sine luce, sine ullo opere destruit. Sen. de Benef. 7. 31.

Plal. 73. 10. 94. 7. 10. 11.

Quippe sapientissimos veterum, quique sectam eorum emulantur, diversos reperies; ac multis instam opinionem non initia nostri, non finem, non denique homines Dns cura; ideo creberrima & tristia in bonos, lata apud deteriores esse. Tac. Ann. VI.

Jer. 12. 1. Job 21. 7.

Job 10. 3.

Psal. 73. 13.

Mal. 3. 14.

Psal. 73. 2.

Θεὸς ὁρῶντος τὰς ψυχὰς διδασκων.

Nullos esse Deos, inane caelum, Affirmat selius, probatque quod se Factum, dum negat hac, videt beatum. Mart. 4. 20.

Sunt nobis nulla profecto Numina, cum caelo rapiantur secula caesi Mentimur regnare Jovem, &c. Luc. VII. 445.

what most becometh him as God and Governour of the world, his most excellent goodnes and admirable clemency toward his creatures and subjects, in *waiting to be gracious*, and providing for their return to a better mind; affording them time, and means of reforming their minds and manners, that so they may escape the stroke of final vengeance; so in most cases, and in some also signifying his wise justice in suffering bad men to proceed forward to an inexcusable pitch of guilt, in order to their more clearly just condemnation, and severe punishment hereafter; that be-

Rom. 9. 22. Jer. 12. 3.
"Αγρίων αὐτὸς εἰς ἡμέραν σφαγῆς αὐ-
των. 70.

Ut victima saginantur, ut hostia coro-
nantur. Min. Fel.

Then also from God's permitting good men to suffer, how smartly soever, nothing can be inferr'd prejudicial unto divine goodnes, or justice; since they are thereby made fitter for, and do attain a surer title to those excellent rewards, which he upon such tryal and approbation of their virtues doth intend to confer upon them; especially considering, that afflictions are necessary both as means of rendring men good, and as occasions of expressing their goodnes; that scarce any virtue could subsist, or could appear without them.

Iustus quicquid malorum inrogatur, non
est poena criminis, sed virtutis examen.
Aug.

Experitur, indurat, sibi ipsum prepa-
rat. Sen. de Prov. 1.

Vid. Chryf.
dysp. α.

Semper esse felicem, Et sine morsu ani-
mi transire vitam, ignorare est rerum natura
alteram partem. Sen de Prov. 4.

There could be no such thing as Patience, if there were no adversities to be endured; no such thing as contentedness, if there were no wants to be felt; no such thing as industry, if there were no pains to be taken; no such thing as humility, if sensible infirmities and crosses did not prompt us to sober thoughts, and shew us what we are. There would be no true wisdom, no clear knowledg of our selves, or right judgment of things, without experiencing the worst half of things. We should never learn to master our passions, or temper our appetites, or wrest our inclinations to a compliance with reason, if that discipline were away, which the Holy Psalmist intimateth, saying; *It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn thy statutes.* How much we do love God, how submissive we are to God's will, how little we do value these mean things here, we cannot otherwise, than by willingly undergoing, or patiently bearing afflictions, well express; without it no sure trial of virtue can be, without it no excellent example of goodnes had ever been. As therefore it is necessary, that good men, even that they may be good, should suffer here; so it is supposing a future judgment, very just that they should do so; that they may acquire a title to the rewards following it; rewards far outweighing the light afflictions they are put to endure here.

In reference therefore to the present impunity of bad men, and letting iniquity to prevail, or to proceed here, that which cured David, Job and Solomon may satisfie us; going into the sanctuary, and understanding the end of those men; considering that *the wicked is reserved to the day of destruction, and shall be brought out to the day of wrath*; that after all their jollity and pleasure, God for all those things will bring them into judgment. In regard to the righteous being afflicted here, that of S. Paul may suffice, saying of them; *It is a manifest instance of God's righteous judgment, that they may be made worthy of the Kingdom of God, for which they suffer*; that of our Saviour, *Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and shall reproach you; rejoyce ye in that day, and leap for joy, for behold your reward is great in heaven*; that of Solomon, *Though a sinner do evil a hundred times, and his days be prolonged, yet surely, I know, that it shall be well with them that fear God*: In respect to both sorts of men, that of S. Peter will resolve all doubt; *God knoweth how to deliver the godly out of trials, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished*; all scores will be fully quitted by the execution of that sentence pronounced by our Judge himself: *The wicked shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal.*

This Hypothesis doth indeed even to our common sense thoroughly solve most of those appearances in the course of things here, which otherwise might seem intricate or strange; clearing providence from all misprisions, and satisfying our minds so far as is needful, concerning the reasons of most occurrences here: from
That

That God in his great *drama*, made up of his providence, and our free-will concurrently or interchangeably acting, doth mean, in order to this *catastrophe* of judgment in the last and chief Act, to let men go on, playing their parts undisturbedly, according to their inclinations and humours, yet within certain limits, and under the check of his hand, in proper seasons, to prevent confusion of all, interposing it self.

Διὰ τὸτο ἔπα. κρίσις, ἵνα καὶ πλείους στεφανώσωμεν, ἵνα ἀπὸ πορνείας πολλὰς μεταβληθώμεν εἰς ἀρετὴν. Chryl. in Matt. Or. 11.

That it is not therefore fit now by open significations, either of approbation or dislike, often to interrupt the process of humane actions; especially considering that the final doom concerning persons, is not to be grounded upon single passages, or the particular acts of one time, but upon the whole body of action passing through the course of each man's part, in the place and time allotted to him; and that he, who now acteth laudably, may, before all is done, come to fault: he that now behaveth himself untowardly, may afterward learn to do better, and in the end come off well.

That hence it is not to be wondred, that God here should be somewhat reserved in dispensing testimonies of favour to those, who at present do seem good, somewhat sparing in declaring wrath toward those, who now appear bad; that he should not miraculously pour down golden showers on the heads of the righteous, nor send *fire from heaven*, as angry men would have him, upon every provocation, to consume sinners. Ecclef. 3. 11. 8. 17. 11. 5. Luke 9. 55.

That this life is not a time of reaping, but of sowing; not of approbation, but of trial; not of triumph, but of combat; this world is not a place of enjoyment, but of work; our condition here is not a state of settlement, but of travel: whence no man should expect more of encouragement, than is needful to support him in this work and way; should look to receive wages before his task is done; to get the prize, before he hath gone through the race; to gather the spoils, before he hath fought out the battle; to enjoy rest, before he is at his journey's end; to be put in full possession of happiness, before his right and title thereto is completely assured: That no man also should presume or please himself upon present impunity for his misbehaviour or sloth (like those of whom the Preacher saith, *Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil*) seeing this is the season of mercy and patience, when God commonly doth not farther inflict crosses on us, than may serve to mind us of our duty, or urge us to the performance of it; and seeing the longer vengeance is withheld, the more heavy it will at last fall on us, if we despise the present season of grace, and proceed to the end in impenitence: That present impunity therefore is a fore punishment, and correction here a really great favour. Ecclef. 8. 11.

That ordinarily temporal prosperity and adversity, as in comparison to things relating to our future state, they are plainly inconsiderable, so they can be no arguments of God's special favour or displeasure; whence it appeareth to be no small rashness to conclude how God stands affected to any person from what befalleth him here (as those who infer'd concerning the *Galileans*, whose blood Pilate mixed with their sacrifices; and concerning those *Jews*, upon whom the Tower in *Siloam* did fall, that they were more sinners than others of their nation) yea, that if we must be interpreting God's mind from these occurrences, it is rather more reasonable to conceive, that God disliketh them whom he doth not check, and approveth them whom he chastiseth; whence the prosperity of bad men is rather pitiable, than invidious, as that which aggravateth and strengthneth their wickedness, which accumulateth guilt, which draweth them forward, and plungeth them deeper into perdition; that the adversity of good men is no misery, but a blessing and happiness to them; as exercising and fortifying their virtues, ensuring their state, endearing them to God: however, Prov. 3. 12. Job 5. 17. Heb. 12. 7. Apoc. 3. 19. Prov. 23. 17. Luke 16. 25.

That God plainly doth mean to vilify these present things, appearing to our sense good or evil, by scattering them abroad with an indifferent hand; so that his friends taste as little good, and as much evil, as his enemies.

Nulla modo potest Deus magis concupita traducere, quam si illa in turpissimos defert, ab optimis abigit. Sen. de Prov. 5.

That there is no reason to wonder, or to complain, that things here do not go on in a course so smooth and streight, as they should do; for that vanity and iniquity have their

Dantur bonis ne putentur mala, dantur malis ne putentur summa bona. Aug.

part and time to act upon this stage, yea are allowed sometimes a seeming reign; but Justice, though at present it seemeth to sleep, or to wink at things, will at length awake, and effectually bestir it self; that Right, although here it may be sometime crossed, or foiled, yet it can never be quell'd or overthrown; it may be suspended, but cannot be suppressed; it may be somewhat eclipsed, but it cannot be quite extinguished; yea infallibly in the end it will triumphantly prevail.

That no good design shall be undertaken, nor any honest labour can be spent in vain, seeing although they chance to find no success, or to yeild no fruit here, yet they cannot fail to obtain a happy issue, and a plentiful reward hereafter.

That how small soever the difference doth now appear between wise men, and fools (or between virtuous and vicious persons) there will be hereafter a vast discrimination made, when in consequence of that upright trial one shall enter into eternal bliss, the other shall fall into an abyss of misery.

That this life is not contemptible, nor all things here utterly vain; seeing that upon this life is founded our eternal state; seeing these occurrences have influence upon our eternal joy, or woe; seeing all things here will conduce to the illustration of divine mercy, or justice. That God is indeed here *Deus absconditus* (as the Prophet stileth him) *a God that hideth himself*; advisedly suffering his goodness and justice to be under a cloud, that at length they may break out more gloriously *in that day, when* (as S. Paul saith) his *δικαιοσυνη*, his most *righteous dealing* (both in governance of all affairs now, and in deciding of all cases then) *shall be revealed*, and made conspicuous to all the world.

Thus doth it, upon many accounts, appear fit and needful, that there should be a future judgment; the apprehension thereof being the sharpest spur to virtue, the strongest curb from vice, the surest fence of human society, the safest bulwark of Religion (securing the authority of God, and guarding his providence, together with all his holy attributes, from all batteries, all sinister aspersions, all profane misconstructions) in short, the most effectual means, if it be heartily embraced, to render men in their minds, and in their enjoyments sober, just in their dealings toward their neighbour, and in all their life pious toward God; there being indeed no consideration, whereof the mind of man is capable, more apt to beget in him a care and conscience of what he doeth, than this; that after a very short and transitory life, all his actions must undergo a strict scrutiny, according to the result whereof he shall be either approved and rewarded, or condemned and punished; whereof any man being thoroughly perswaded, and any-wise considering it, he cannot surely but accuse himself of extream folly, and madness, if he doth not provide for that account, and order all his practice with a regard thereto. The which use of this point God by his grace dispose us to make, for the sake of *Jesus* our blessed Redeemer, to whom for ever be all glory and praise.

1 Thes. 5. 23. *Now the very God of peace sanctifie you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body, be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.*

From thence He shall come to judge
the quick and the dead.

S E R M O N XXXIII.

The Certainty and Circumstances of a
Future Judgment, from Divine Re-
velation.

A C T S X. 42.

*And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify, that it is
he which was ordained by God to be judge of quick and dead.*



THESE words are part of a *Sermon* preached by S. Peter to *Cornelius* and his friends, wherein the *Apostle* briefly declareth unto them the chief particulars in the history of *Christ*, together with some main points of Christian doctrine most fit for them to know; particularly he doth in these words express the point concerning the *future Judgment*; reporting that our Lord especially did charge his Apostles *to preach unto the people and testify*, that is, first publickly to declare and explain, then by convenient proofs, especially by divine attestations, to evince and perswade this point; the importance whereof, and eminence among other Christian doctrines doth hence plainly appear, that the author of our faith did make so special provision, and gave so express charge concerning the promulgation and probation thereof: the which circumstance is indeed remarkable and weighty; but I shall not insist on it, meaning immediately to set upon considering the point it self, as it is here laid down in these terms — *that it is he which was ordained by God to be Judge of quick and dead*: In which words are couched *three* particulars most considerable;

1. A judgment ordained by God, and to be declared to men.
2. The Judge by whom immediately that judgment is administered, *He*; *Jesus*, our Lord and Saviour.
3. The extent of that judgment, or its adequate object, *quick and dead*.

These particulars I shall in order touch, inserting some material considerations about the nature and manner of this judgment, with some reasons why it should be thus managed; then I shall adjoin some practical applications.

1. There is a judgment ordained by God, and to be declared to men; that is, concerning the persons and actions of men performed in this life. How just and fit it is that there should be such a judgment, how useful and requisite the declaration thereof is upon several accounts (for engaging men upon the practice of Virtue, and restraining them from Vice; for the preservation and maintenance of human Society, for the support and defence of Religion, for the vindication of divine Providence, and illustration of all God's holy Attributes) I have already endeavoured to declare; and in that regard I shall content my self now to say, that as upon the apparent equity and usefulness of this doctrine, all nations com-

com-

Just. M. p. 1. commonly have ever embraced the general substance thereof, as a fundamental principle of their Religion (all men commonly with a ready inclination having avowed it reasonable to suppose, that every man after this life shall be brought unto a just and impartial bar, where his doings shall be exactly scan'd, and his person answerably doomed unto a comfortable or afflictive recompence) so our Religion in a peculiar manner doth most expressly assert, most clearly describe, and most vigorously inculcate it, with all possible advantage, both for the clearing God's dealings and attributes, and for the excitement of men to a virtuous and pious life; the nature, manner, process and result of the future judgment are in the Holy Scripture most punctually set down.

1. It teacheth us, that God hath appointed a determinate time for this judgment: *God (saith S. Paul) hath appointed a day, in which he will judge the world in righteousness*; that which is called *the day of judgment, the last day, the day of the Lord, the great, and the illustrious day*; and by signal excellency, *The day*; and, *That day*; intimating, beside the certainty of the thing it self, the most especial regard, that men are concerned to bear thereto.

2. That in order to this judgment all the actions of men are with greater exactness registred in books (the books of divine omniscience, seeing all things present, and retaining all things past, which nothing can escape) *The books (tis said in the Revelation) were opened, and the dead were judged from the things written in the books, according to their works.*

3. That in order thereto, there shall be effected by Divine Power and Command a general resurrection of all persons, both *just and unjust*: *The hour (saith our Lord) is coming, in which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good to the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation.*

4. That then all persons so raised shall be presented at the bar of our Lord to answer and undergo their trial. *I saw (saith S. John) the great and small standing before God's Throne*; and, *We must all (saith S. Paul) be made appear, and be set forth at the judgment seat of Christ*; and, *The son of man (saith our Lord) shall sit upon the throne of his glory, and all nations shall be gathered together before him.*

5. That then and there every thought, every word, every work of men shall be thoroughly disclosed and discussed; so that it, together with its due quality and desert, shall plainly appear; all the designs and pretences of men shall be laid bare; every case shall be considered, every plea heard and scan'd, the merits of every cause weighed in an even balance, according to truth and equity; Mens neglects and omissions of duty shall also come under consideration; an account will be exacted of all the talents entrusted to any man (of the abilities, opportunities and advantages he ever had of doing God service) and of what improvements answerable he hath made; what men have done themselves, and what they have done by others from the influence of their advice, their persuasion, or their example, shall be searcht out, and poised; *God (saith S. Paul) will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of hearts*; and, *Of every idle word, that men shall speak, they shall render an account at the day of judgment, saith our Lord*; and, *After a long time (saith he again) the Lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them, &c. and, Every work (saith the Preacher) God shall bring into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.*

6. That upon each man, according to the true quality of his doings, thus detected, examined, and stated, a definitive sentence shall pass, whereby he shall be acquitted, and approved, or condemned and reprobated; *τὸτε ὁ ἑταίριος ἡνὸςλα ἰνδρῶ, then (saith S. Paul) praise shall be to each one*; praise, that is generally (by an *εὐεπιστομῶς*, or favourable manner of speech) a due taxation and esteem, according to merit; then, *Well done good and faithful servant*; and, *O thou bad, and slothful servant*, shall be pronounced to one, or t'other sort of men, respectively, according to their demeanour here.

7. That according to the purport of this sentence a discrimination shall be made; and to one party a gracious reward, correspondent to the quality and measure of their good works in a blissful place, to the other a sorer punishment, in proportion to their demerits, in a place of misery; to the one everlasting joy and

and glory above in heaven, to the other endless sorrow and shame beneath in hell, shall be assigned, and dispensed effectually. *The son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his Angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works; He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats; and he shall set his sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left; then the King shall say unto them on his right hand, Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the World — and, Then he shall say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me ye cursed into everlasting fire prepared for the Devil and his Angels. And, the good and faithful servant shall enter into his Master's joy, the bad and slothful shall be cast into utter darkness, where is weeping and gnashing of teeth; so our Lord himself expresseth it; and S. Paul thus, We must, saith he, all appear before the tribunal of God, that each one may bear away the things done in the body, according to what he hath done, whether it be good, or bad; and, God will render to every man according to his works — to them, who by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life; but unto them that are contentious, and obey not the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doeth evil: and even of old the Prophet Daniel thus briefly did express this different doom; Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake; some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. Hence in regard to one party is the time of judgment stiled the season of refreshment, the day of redemption, the time of recompence; in reference to the other, the day of wrath, the day of destruction, the time of vengeance; when our Lord will, as S. Paul saith, take vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.*

8. We are also farther taught, that all this shall be transacted in a regular, publick, and most solemn manner, in open court, in the face and audience of all the world, before Angels and men. For our Lord is described coming to judgment with attendance of all the Holy Angels; and the Saints, being themselves first approved, shall become assessors there; and all men are represented as present at the trial, or as spectators and auditors thereof: *Whosoever (saith our Lord) shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the Angels of God: but he that denyeth me before men, shall be denied before the Angels of God. And, There is nothing covered that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known: whatsoever ye have spoken in darkness shall be heard in the light, and that which ye have spoken in closets shall be proclaimed upon the house-tops.*

9. That also the judgment shall pass to the full conviction, and entire satisfaction of all that are present; so that each one concerned therein shall be forced in conscience to acquiesce in his doom, as most just and equal; the condemned stooping with awe to his justice; the absolved adoring with humble reverence his mercy; the spectators applauding with admiration his holy wisdom: for that day will be, as S. Paul calleth it, a day of revelation of God's righteous judgment; and God, in regard thereto is represented speaking thus; *To me, as I live saith the Lord, every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall give glory to God; and our Lord, in that day, saith S. Paul, will be glorified in his Saints, and admired in all them that believe; and, He will then (as it is in S. Jude) convince all that are ungodly of all their ungodly deeds, which they have ungodlily committed, and of all the hard speeches, which ungodly sinners have spoken against him. So that thereupon those confessions, and acclamations of praise in the Revelation shall be refounded through heaven; Allelujah, salvation and glory, and power be to the Lord our God, for true and righteous are his judgments. Salvation be unto our Lord, that sitteth on the throne, and to the Lamb: Great and wonderful are thy works, O Lord God almighty; just and true are thy ways, O thou King of Saints.*

Thus do the holy *Pandects* of our Religion set out that judgment, which all men hereafter must undergo; wherein all the attributes of God shall be conspicuously glorified; his wonderful clemency shall be sweetly displayed, his exact justice shall be terribly demonstrated, his perfect wisdom shall be clearly unfolded; wherein the knotty intrigues of providence shall be loosed, and the mysterious depths of the divine counsels shall be laid open; and God's honour, which now by the bold and rash judgments of men is often attack'd, shall be thoroughly

cleared and repaired, to the joyful satisfaction of all pious men, and sad confusion of the impious; wherein the great wisdom of those, who before all things chuse to be good, and to serve God, and the extreme folly of those who scorn or neglect piety, shall be most evidently apparent; wherein finally all secrets, that now so undiscernably run on, shall be exactly quitted, and even; impartial right shall be done; every man shall have his due assigned and rendred to him.

But let so much suffice concerning the Judgment appointed; we proceed to the next particular, The Judge ordained, *He*, that is, *Jesus* our Lord and Saviour.

II. The original right, and absolute power of judging doth inseparably pertain to God Almighty, whose creatures, whose servants, whose subjects we are, and consequently to whose judgment we stand obnoxious. As he is naturally the Sovereign Lord and King of the world, so he is, as the *Apostle* calleth him,

Heb. 12. 13. *κρίτης παντός*, the Judge of all persons and things; and particularly, Judge of all

Gen. 18. 29. *the earth*, or of all men, as *Abraham* did stile him. As upon the grounds specified we do owe obedience to the Laws he prescribeth us, performance of the service he allotteth us, and improvement of the talents he committeth to us; so we do thence stand obliged to render an account to him of our correspondent behaviour, and due management in those respects, and are liable to the judgment he shall make thereof: All judgment therefore must be exercised either immediately by God himself, or in subordination to him; in his name and right, and by virtue of authority derived from him; otherwise that of *S. Paul*, *Who art thou that judgest anothers servant*, might be alledged against any, who without licence, or commission from him should presume to judge us.

Rom. 14. 4.

Now that immediately God should administer any judgment, is incongruous to his nature, and to ours; it is particularly unsuitable to the manner of this

Etenim ea qua judicantur, oportebat videre judicem & scire hunc a quo judicantur, &c. Item. 3. 9.

Rectum erat, ut judicandi viderent judicem. Aug.

judgment, which God designeth to be such, as may pass openly before all the world, to the conspicuous declaration of his glorious justice and mercy, to the clear satisfaction and conviction of all persons interested therein: which that it might be, *it was fit* (as *S. Austin* saith) *that they who are to be judged should see their Judge*; it is fit, that the assistants,

and spectators, or witnesses thereof should discern the process: but the glorious and dreadful presence of God cannot be discernable by us, or would not be sup-

1 Tim. 6. 16. portable: *He* (saith *S. Paul*) *inhabiteh inaccessible light*, so that no man hath seen, or can see him; and, *Thou canst not see my face* (saith he to *Moses*) *for there shall*

Exod. 33. 20. *no man see me and live*: that Majesty, before which the purest *Seraphims*, being

Isa. 6. 2. dazzled with its infinite brightness, are constrained to veil their faces; that presence, of which the Prophet saith, *The mountains quake at him, and the hills melt,*

Nah. 1. 5. *and the earth is burnt in his presence; yea the world, and all that dwell therein.*

(Pl. 104. 32. 18. 18.) How should frail and impure flesh sustain? How should guilty sinners appear before him? *Who may stand in his sight when he is angry?* when he is angry, at

Psal. 76. 7. *whose wrath the earth shall tremble, and the nations shall not be able to abide his indignation*: What ear of mortal man could endure that voice, at which the earth

Jer. 10. 10. *melteth*, that reproof, at which the pillars of heaven are astonished? It being therefore from the divine excellency impossible, or inconvenient, that God himself

Psal. 46. 6. *immediately*, as such, should exercise judgment, it hath pleased him, in his stead,

Job 26. 11. to constitute one most fit for that employment: as he for particular temporal judgments here hath appointed Princes and Governours visibly to manage them as his

Ministers and Vicegerents, in his name and behalf; so that universal and ultimate judgment, he hath (for his own greater glory, and our special benefit) committed

unto his loving Son *Jesus*, our blessed Mediator and Saviour; the same, who with the most admirable condescension of grace and charity, did once come hither in our nature to rescue us from sin and misery; who underwent so many crosses and troubles for us; who freely laid down his life to redeem and save us; he

it is, who is *ἀποκρίτης* *τοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ κριτῆς*, decreed and determined by God (or under him,

as his substitute and deputy) to be our Judge; so in our Text; and so again *S. Paul*, *God hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness,*

2 Cor. 5. 10. *ἐν ἀνδρὶ ᾧ θέλω*, by the man, or in the man, whom he hath ordained; whence it is

1 Cor. 4. 4. called, *the judgment seat of Christ*, before which we must appear; and, *The Father*

John 5. 22, 27. (saith our Lord himself) *judgeth no man* (that is immediately and separately) but

bath

hath given all judgment to the Son; and, The Father (he addeth) hath given to the Son the authority, and to execute judgment, because he is the Son of man; that is, God hath conferr'd on him the sovereign regal authority, and hath particularly committed to him that prime branch thereof, Judicial power, even as he is the Son of man: so that as in our nature he performed all that was requisite to save us, as in our nature he was exalted to God's right hand to rule and bless us; so for consummation of all done in our regard, he shall in our nature appear to judge us; awarding to us the rewards he purchased for us, or punishments for the contempt of his favours.

— Illa forma videbitur Filii, quam sibi per sacramentum incarnationis univit, &c. Prosp. Sent. 337.

And indeed, that he under this name and notion was designed to this office, even the antient Prophets did forehew; for it was *one like the Son of man*, whom *Daniel* did behold coming with the clouds of heaven, having all royal dominion and power given unto him; and it was according to *Esay's* predictions, the *Son born and given unto us, upon whose shoulder the government should be*, and to whom the Kingdom should be assigned, *to order it, and establish it, with judgment and justice for ever.*

The point then is manifest, that our Saviour *Jesus*, by designment and deputation from God, is invested with this eminent office and power. And why it should be so, many reasons, many fair congruities may be assigned.

1. It was requisite (as we before touched) that the Judge should be visible, and audible; such whom the parties concerned might (without extreme surprize and amazement) discern and converse with, in order to their clearer and fuller satisfaction, or conviction: such our Lord, the Son of man, clothed with glorified flesh, will be; his mild and sweet, though bright and stately aspect, all men in some manner may be capable of seeing; his calm and clear voice all men may hear: Him the just may with chearful satisfaction behold smiling on them with gracious kindness, and the wicked also with sad confusion may view frowning toward them with just disdain; those with comfortable joy may hear him acquitting, commending and blessing them; these with due regret also may hear him convincing, reproofing, and denouncing the fatal curse on them; so that hereupon the former with humble thankfulness shall willingly acknowledge and praise his grace, the latter with shameful horror constrainedly shall confess their guilt before him: *Behold* (saith *S. John*, with an emphatical regard it seems to this consideration) *he cometh in the clouds, and every eye shall see him, even they who pierced him; and, They, saith our Lord himself, shall see the Son of man coming upon the clouds of heaven, in power, and great glory; and, our Lord is represented in judgment, speaking and arguing the case with all parties concerned, receiving their plea, and expressing his mind to them: This is a kind of natural capacity qualifying him for this employment, but there are considerations of a higher nature peculiarly fitting him for it.*

Apoc. 1. 7. Mat. 24. 30. 26. 64. 25. 34, &c.

2. It was indeed a good part of that Regal Office, which God, in reward of his obedience, and to declare his acceptance thereof, did confer upon him; giving him *a power over all flesh, all authority in heaven and earth*: whence it is by *S. Paul* called *his Kingdom*; *I charge thee*, saith he to *Timothy*, *before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom*: He being then our King, and as such the fountain of all justice, must either himself in person, or by some delegate administer it; but that he should immediately do it, divers special reasons do suggest themselves.

John 17. 2. Mat. 28. 18. 2 Tim. 4. 1.

3. It is an office of too great eminence and dignity to be imparted to any other: He alone who subsists in union with God, who is the Son of God, who hath most highly pleased God, who hath merited a Sovereignty over us, and a supreme eminency above all creatures, is capable of the honour to determine those points of the highest importance concerning the final doom of God's Creatures, and the salvation of those souls whom he hath purchased: *Worthy is he alone to receive the book (of Judgment) and to open the seals thereof, because he was slain, and hath redeemed us to God by his blood: Worthy is the Lamb (worthy exclusively and solely) that was slain, to receive the power, and honour, the glory and blessing, annexed to this high office.*

Apoc. 5. 9, 12.

As there is nothing more apt to beget in us veneration toward him, than considering that he shall be our Judge, upon whose sentence our fate and felicity must

depend; so it is therefore most fit, that it incommunicably, and solely should belong to him; especially seeing God with especial regard to his honour did assign John 5. 22, 23. the judicial office to him; the *Father*, 'tis said, *hath committed all judgment to the Son, that all men might honour the Son, as they do the Father.*

4. He alone also hath capacities proper for this judicature: he only hath that divine faculty of searching mens hearts; he only is furnished with wisdom to know all matters of fact that ever were, and to discern the right in every case; he above all being absolutely good, is endued with perfect equity of mind, and immutable love of right, Heb. 5. 2. always disposing him to judge most justly; he alone can have in him that *μετεωρίζουσα*, or exact temperament of affection toward men, which is requisite to the distribution of equal justice toward them, according to due measures of mercy and severity; the highest Angel in heaven were incapable so rightly to distinguish the strict bounds of these things. Wherefore in regard to these dispositions peculiar to him, we are even by the antient Prophets informed, that this office is allotted Isa. 11. 2, 3. to him; *The Spirit of the Lord, saith Esay, shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom — and shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord; and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, nor reprove after the hearing of his ears; but with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity, for the meek of the earth.* And, *A bruised reed* (saith God in the same Prophet, intimating his incomparable sagacity, equity and temper, as it were, for this purpose) *shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench; he shall bring forth judgment unto truth.* Isa. 42. 3. And, *Thou*, saith the Psalmist concerning him, *lovest righteousness, and hatest iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.* Psal. 45. 7.

5. By this designation the glory of God is especially promoted, his most excellent attributes being much illustrated thereby: his wisdom appeareth in constituting one so in all respects most fit to discharge the office; and his goodness most clearly shines therein: for since it was requisite that a judgment should pass upon us, how could the terror thereof be better allayed, than by putting it into the hands of his Son? to whose cognizance, were the choice permitted to us, should we rather submit our actions, than to his? to whom rather should we freely commit all our life and welfare, than to him, who by nature is so nearly allied to us, and hath not disdained to call us brethren? who in disposition of spirit is so meek and Matt. 11. 29. lowly, so merciful and compassionate? who here was visibly in disposition and demeanour a Lamb, and is represented to us continuing such; than to him, who by Heb. 2. 17. 4. 15. so many signal experiments hath expressed an excess of kindness towards us, and tenderness of our welfare: who hath conspicuously evidenced himself to be the best friend to mankind; that he ardently desireth the salvation of men, even of his worst enemies, for whom he willingly did spend his blood, for whom he dying earnestly prayed; whom he continually woeth to reconciliation and repentance, and consequently to the enjoyment of greatest happiness? how then could God more plainly express his goodness toward us, than in assigning such a Judge for us?

How also could he exhibit a more illustrious instance of his justice, and love to righteousness, than in advancing him to so glorious an office, who out of perfect compliance to his will did freely stoop so low, and gladly undergo so much? Apoc. 5. 12. Worthy of God it was, and a congruous retribution to place the Crown on his head, to put the Scepter into his hand; who willingly bore a cross, who patiently submitted to a scourge; to constitute him the Judge, who out of abundant piety to God, and charity to God's creature, was contented to be arraigned, to be sentenced, to be executed as a malefactor: he dearly purchased the right to be Lord Rom. 14. 9. of dead and living, and just it was that in effect he should obtain it.

6. Just it likewise was, that to him, immediately and solemnly, should be assigned a power to acknowledge and reward his faithful friends and servants; those who had believed his word, had observed his laws, had out of love and respect done much, and suffered much for him.

Just also it was, that he should be impowered to do himself right upon his proud and spiteful enemies; that he should see them lying under his feet, and at his disposal, who had so scornfully insulted on him, and so cruelly misused him; that he righteously should judge them, who so maliciously had accused, and so injuriously

condemned him; should chastise them severely, who most unmercifully had afflicted and slaughtered him; should worthily reprobate all those, who had unworthily rejected him; in fine, that he should render a due recompence to all wicked persons, who by distrusting his word, by despising his overtures of grace and mercy, by resisting his will, and rejecting his authority, by trampling upon his holy doctrine and laws, had wronged, had dishonoured, had disclaimed him.

7. This appointment of Jesus for our Judge is farther very conducive to our edification, in way of excitement to the practice of our duty, and encouragement thereto; in way of consolation and satisfaction to our Soul.

It considered is apt to raise in us a high reverence and dread of our Saviour, and consequently to dispose us to the observance of his laws, and imitation of his example.

It is matter of special comfort and encouragement to consider, that hence assuredly we shall find a fair and favourable trial; since 'tis no enemy, not one disaffected, yea, not one indifferently affected toward us, who shall judge us, but our best friend; from whom we may expect not only justice and equity, but all the favour and kindness our cause will bear.

It also duly pondered is most proper to work in us an earnest care, and fear of sinning, and thereby of becoming obnoxious to condemnation; for what an aggravation will it yield to our whether foolish perverseness, or slothful negligence? how extream disingenuity, how wretched ingratitude will it argue in us to be cast and condemned by such a judge; a judge so fair and equal, so mild and gentle, so benign and favourable to us; so willing to acquit us, so desirous to save us? With what face think we, having transgressed his most good and righteous laws, having rejected all his gracious tenders of mercy and favour, having defeated all his most serious purposes, and frustrated his most painful endeavours for our welfare; having violated our manifold obligations and engagements to him; having abused his so unexpressibly great love and good will toward us; having hence deplorably forfeited all his favour, and incurred his most grievous displeasure; with what face, I say, having done all this shall we appear in his presence? how then shall we bear the frowns of his tender love changed into fierce disdain, of highest patience turned into extream fury, of so terrible a Majesty provoked by so heinous affronts? with what heart shall we hear that once most sweet and charming voice, which in so pleasant and affectionate a strain did sound forth words of peace and comfort in our ears, that so kindly invited us to reconciliation, so meekly sued us to a compliance with him, so liberally offered to us the best things in the world upon so gentle terms, now only uttering toward us bitter complaints, and sore rebukes; thundring forth words of indignation and terror, denouncing most horrible menaces and curses upon us?

Thus, and to such purposes is Jesus our Lord appointed to be our Judge: I shall only farther touch the manner of his exercising, and executing this Office, or the way of his address and proceeding thereto; the which in *Holy Scripture* (for the begetting in us a regard, veneration and awe futable thereto) is described to be with greatest glory, state and solemnity. Our Lord came once in a meek humility to shew us our duty, but he shall come again with a dreadful majesty to exact an account thereof; taking his progress from the highest Heavens in most royal magnificent equipage, attended upon with a numerous, or with a numberless, and most pompous train of Angels, (*with all the Holy Angels*, it is expressly said) accompanied with triumphal shouts and acclamations; a trumpet of God (that is, a wonderfully and unconceivably sonorous trumpet, blown as it were by the mouth of God) and the voice of an Arch-angel resounding before him an Universal summons, with a noise so loud and piercing, as shall immediately (*in a moment*, in the twinkling of an eye) shake all the earth, and rouse all the dead out of their mortal slumber; the irresistible breath of that all-powerful voice wafting them, together with all surviving people, through the clouds into the presence of their Judge, conspicuously seated in most glorious State on his Royal Tribunal.

This same Jesus (said the two Angels to the Apostles expressing this matter in the most simple and plain manner) shall come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven; a cloud took him up from their eyes then, and the clouds, as they imply, should restore him to their sight; for, Behold, saith S. John, he cometh with the clouds, and every eye shall see him. And, They shall see the Son of man coming upon

2 Cor. 5. 20.

Heb. 12. 22.

Matt. 25. 31.

Jude 14.

1 Thes. 4. 16.

2 Thes. 1. 7.

1 Cor. 15. 52.

1 Thes. 4. 17.

Matt. 25. 31.

Acts 1. 11.

Apoc. 1. 7.

Matt. 24. 30.

16. 64.

Matt. 25. 31. upon the clouds of heaven in power and great glory; and, When the Son of man shall
 16. 27. come in his glory, and all the Angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of
 2 Thes. 1. 17. his glory, saith our Lord himself somewhat more explicitly; but S. Paul with
 1 Thes. 4. 16. most punctuality describeth the manner of his appearance: The Lord, saith he,
 1 Cor. 15. 52. shall descend from heaven with a shout (*ἐν κραυγῇ*, with an exciting or commanding summons) with the voice of an Arch-angel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we, which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall ever be with the Lord. In such manner to the purpose of exciting due respect and dread within us, is our Lord represented at the end of the world to come down from Heaven, for the exercising this judgment.

III. I proceed to the last particular observed in the Text, which is the objects, or the extent of the judgment ordained; whom is our Lord ordained to judge? how many shall they be? it is resolved, all without exception, expressed here by the words *quick and dead*; and elsewhere by S. Paul, I charge thee, saith he to
 2 Tim. 4. 1. } Timothy, before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and dead
 Rom. 14. 9. }
 1 Pet. 4. 5. at his appearing and his Kingdom; and by S. Peter likewise; Who (saith he concerning prophane men) shall render an account to him that is ready to judge both the quick and dead. Which places evidently do confirm the truth of the proposition, that all men are obnoxious, and shall be subjected to this judgment; but yet so that the words themselves, *quick and dead*, may seem to need some explication: for it being a common law, to which all men by nature, such as it now stands after the curse, are subject to undergo death; for thence *It is*, as the Apostle saith,
 Heb. 9. 27. appointed for men once to die, and after death judgment; and, what man is he, saith
 1 Chron. 28. 9. the Psalmist, that shall not see death? and that being so, why should not the dead comprehend all that are to be judged? accordingly as we see it expressed in the Re-
 Apoc. 20. 12. velation; I saw the dead great and small, standing before God — and the dead were judged for the things written in the Books, according to their works: the dead were judged, no mention is made of the living; wherefore to evade this objection, some have interpreted the dead and living not for a distinction of persons, but of parts in men, of the living souls and dead bodies of men; others have taken the words as signifying metaphorically the living, that is, righteous men, say they, or persons endued with a spiritual life; and the dead, that is, persons dead in trespasses and sins; or void of spiritual sense and activity. But the difficulty is not so mighty as to force us upon so remote and absonous interpretations, S. Paul having plainly enough shewed us how to understand his words, and how to solve the knot propounded; that by the living are to be understood those, who shall be found as it were surprized alive at our Lord's coming; by the dead all other persons, who from the beginning before that time had deceased, and should be raised up at the sound of the last trump: This we say to you (saith he to the Thessalonians) in the word of the Lord, that we which live, remaining at the presence of the Lord, shall not prevent them which are asleep. Our Lord is therefore supposed by the Apostle to find some alive at his coming, wherefore that which is affirmed concerning all men being appointed to taste death (being otherwise, as the instances of Enoch and Elias shew, liable to exception) is to be understood by a *Synecdoche* very ordinary in such cases, for the incomparably greater part of men, for all indeed but one generation; or with this abatement, all but those, whose death shall be prevented by our Lord's appearance (the which is set out as very sudden and unexpected, like the coming of a thief in the night) even those men also being in nature and condition mortal like others, although accidentally thus escaping the actual stroke of death: Neither shall even those persons be so exempted from death, but that they must undergo somewhat equivalent thereto; a change, which shall render them alike prepared for judgment with those who had undergone death; for, Behold, saith S. Paul again to the Corinthians, I tell you a mystery; we shall not all fall asleep, but we shall all be changed in an instant, in the twinkling of an eye: which words alone do with sufficient evidence declare the meaning of this distinction between *quick and dead*. The sum is, that all persons, none excepted, of what condition or quality, what nation or time, what sex, or what age soever, shall be exposed to the judgment; high and low, rich and poor, wise and simple, learned and ignorant, good and bad; the mightiest Princes and Lords no less than the meanest Subjects and Slaves; the subtlest Statesmen and deepest Scholars no less

less than the silliest idiots ; in a word, most universally *All* without any distinction, any priviledge, any acceptance of Persons, all and every one must certainly appear at this bar, must undergo this trial, must here receive their sentence and doom, must undergo reward, or punishment accordingly.

IV. The doctrinal part I have thus gone through of this grand point, it remaineth to make some application thereof. The considering it is indeed most necessary, and exceedingly profitable in many respects : there is no kind of virtue or good practice, which the serious consideration thereof is not apt to produce ; no good affection, which it may not serve to excite ; no good duty to which it doth not powerfully engage us ; there is likewise no ill passion, which it may not help to quell or repress ; no bad design or action, which it may not effectually deter or discourage us from. Of so many particular uses I shall only touch those, which are most obvious ; especially those unto which the Scripture doth expressly apply the consideration thereof.

1. It greatly doth engage us to be very circumspect in all our conversation, and vigilant over our ways ; for since by irreversible decree it is appointed, that we must render an account of every thought arising in our mind (at least of those which find harbour and entertainment there) of every word that passeth through our mouth, of every action which we do undertake, what exceeding reason have we with most attentive, and accurate regard to mind whatever we do ? Since it is certain that for all these things we shall be judged, but uncertain to us when we shall be called thereto ; how watchful are we concerned to be, that we be not surprised, and found unready to yield a good account ? How observant in all reason should we be of our Lord's admonition in the Gospel ; *Watch, for ye do not know the day, nor the hour when the Son of man cometh ?* How affected should we be with that warning, or menace in the Revelation ; *If thou dost not watch, I shall come upon thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know when I come upon thee ?* It may be, as we see intimated, the next day, for all we can know, or the next hour, when death seizing on us shall carry us into that prison or place of durance, where we shall be detained until the time of our being presented at the bar ; and what an unexpressible misery then will it be to be found unprepared for the trial, and unable to render a good account ? If we be quite asleep in a total neglect of our duty, or if we be drowsy in a careless and sluggish performance thereof, or if our senses rest amused upon other cares and businesses impertinent to this account, in what an extreme danger do we abide ? as our Saviour again doth warn, advising thus, *Take heed to your selves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares.* You know what the fortune was of the foolish Virgins, whose lamps were gone out for want of oil ; that is, whose Souls were destitute of true goodness, and whose lives consequently did not shine with good works ; how being surprised in that case by the Bridegroom's coming, they were unfit to meet him, they were excluded from his favour, they were rejected with an, *I know you not.* The like fate you know of that bad servant, who saying in his heart, *my Lord delayeth to come,* (that is not believing, or not considering his state in relation to the future judgment) *began to beat his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken* (that is, did live in the practice of injustice, uncharitableness, and intemperance) his fate shall be this ; *The Lord of that servant will come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not ware of, and shall cut him asunder, and appoint his portion with the hypocrites :* the same, if we do live in gross neglect, or in heinous violation of our duty, will be our doom ; *Let therefore* (as our Lord again doth enjoin, and inculcate) *our loins be girded about, and our lamps burning ; and we our selves like men that wait for their Lord, when he will return from the wedding ; that when he cometh, we may open unto him immediately.* Let us, as S. Peter exhorteth, *gird up the loins of our mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that* (in case of our faithful and constant obedience) *shall be brought unto us, at the Revelation of Jesus Christ.* In fine, considering these things, *What manner of persons then ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for, and hasting unto the coming of our Lord ?* as that great Apostle doth again admonish and argue.

2. The consideration of this point is the most effectual means possible to beget, and preserve sincerity in us ; disposing us to live simply without dissimulation or deceit,

deceit, speaking as we think, doing what we profess, performing what we promise, being as we seem : for seeing our hearts must be thorowly searched and sifted ; since our most retired thoughts must be disclosed ; since our most secret designs, and our desires must come to light, and be exposed to the publick view of Angels and men ; since the day approacheth, when (all vizards being taken off, all varnish of pretence being wiped away) every person shall appear stark naked in his own true shape and colours ; every thing shall seem what it really is, devested of false glosses, what profit can it be now to dissemble, to conceal, or to disguise our thoughts or doings ? To what purpose doth it serve to palliate our ambitious or covetous intents with a specious garb of zeal or conscience ? what comfort can we find in driving on our self-interests, or satisfying our private resentments, in disturbing the peace of mankind, or fomenting stirs and factions in the world under such masks ? what a folly is it to delude men with false appearances, or rather by them to abuse themselves ; seeing they soon will be rightly informed, and we grievously disgraced for it ? What other satisfaction indeed can we have, than in real goodness, and pure integrity in heart and life ; whereby we may now approve our consciences unto God, and shall afterward by his unquestionable judgment be approved to all the world ? Our true wisdom is to be εἰλικρινεῖς καὶ ἀπερίσκατοι (as S. Paul speaketh, that is) *simple and inoffensive toward the day of Christ* ; that is, without any indirect regard or design conscionably to perform our duty toward God and man, in order to the rendring a good account at the last judgment : our best comfort will prove that of S. Paul—the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God we have had our conversation in the world.

Phil. 1. 10.

2 Cor. 1. 10.

3. The consideration of this point should render us very sober and serious in all our thoughts, our opinions, our affections, our actions ; suppressing all proud and haughty conceits, all admiration of these transitory things, all vicious excesses, all vain curiosities, all wanton joys, and satisfactions : For,

Why should any apprehension of worldly state, of wealth, of honour, of wit, of any natural or acquired endowment puff up our minds, seeing the day is near

at hand, which in these regards will quite level men, and set them all upon even ground before an impartial bar, where no such things shall be had in any consideration or regard ; when all secular and external advantages being laid aside, the moral qualities of men only shall be taxed and estimated ; a day wherein all these admired vanities

shall vanish into nothing ; all our empty tumours shall be depressed ; all the fond arrogance of man shall be confounded ; so that the proud and profane ones of the world shall be constrained to say after the Wise Man, *What hath pride profited us, or what good hath riches with our vaunting brought us ? all these things are passed away as a shadow, and as a post that hasteth by.*

Sap. 5. 3.

And why should we much value those splendid toys, or that sordid trash, which men here do so eagerly scrape, and scramble, and scuffle for ; which then evidently will be discountenanced, will at least appear worthless and unprofitable to us ? what indeed in this world, supposing this judgment, being truly rated, can seem great, or worthy to affect us ?

And why having affairs on foot of so immensely vast importance, should we amuse our selves with trivial matters, impertinent at least, if not prejudicial to our main accounts ?

And how shall we dare to embrace the serpent of sinful excess, considering beside the poison in its body what a dreadful sting it carrieth in the tail thereof ; how these flashes of pleasure do kindle a flame, that will scorch us to eternity ? One thought of judgment mixt with any brutish enjoyments were enough, one would think, to allay their sweetness, to render them indeed not only insipid, but distastful and bitter to us.

And how can we be easily transported into wild merriments, suffering our minds to be ruffled, and the tone of our reason to be slackened by them, if we consider how infinitely serious business lieth upon us ; what a dismal hazard we stand in, how nearly our everlasting welfare lieth at stake ? If here in this world we were bound in few days to undergo a trial concerning our life, all our estate, and all our reputation, we should deem it seasonable to be somewhat intent, to be

Οὐ πλάσθη, καὶ πένθη, καὶ θυνάσθης ἐκ ἀδυναμίας, καὶ σοφοῦ, ἐκ ἀσφοδίας, καὶ δόξης, ἐκ ἐλευθέρου, καὶ δόξης φανείτω ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐργασίας τῶν συντελεσάντων, ἢ ὅτι ἐργων ὑξέτασις ἔσται μόνη. Chryl. in Mat. 17. 9.

be indeed very solicitous about what we should plead, and how we should get off, rather than to be lightly sporting at, and loosening our minds in little pleasant humours; much more rather than to be loosing our minds, and banishing all sober thoughts away in exorbitant frolics; extremely wild or stupid would he seem, who in such a case should so behave himself: it is plainly the case of us all, in a degree infinitely more high than we can suppose any other to be; wherefore reflecting thereon should methinks quash all extravagant and dissolute mirth, apt to beat out of our minds and hearts the care of our Souls; should compose our minds into a very serious frame, should presently drive us into, and constantly hold us in a sober sadness of heart; it is a duty which both in wisdom and piety we do owe to this great matter (*the terror of the Lord*, as S. Paul calleth ^{2 Cor. 5. 11.} it) to fear and dread it; with which disposition of spirit excessive transports of carnal joy are scarce consistent: however let us hear (let us I say whose spirits are high, and fancies strong, hear) what the great observer of the world, the Preacher doth admonish: *Rejoyce* (saith he) *O young man, in thy youth, and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth; and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes; but know, that for all these things God will bring thee to judgment.* ^{Eccles. 11. 9}

4. The consideration of this point should engage us carefully to improve all the talents by God's providence and grace committed to us; that is, all the means and abilities, all the advantages and opportunities afforded us of doing good, or serving God. Hath God bestowed wealth upon us? this will engage us so to use it, as not therewith to cherish our pride, or pamper our luxury, not merely to gratify our pleasure or humour; but to expend it in succouring our indigent neighbour, or otherwise promoting God's service. Hath God invested us with power? this should induce us to use it moderately and fruitfully, not therewith to domineer or insult over our brethren, not any-wise to wrong or misuse them; but to yield protection, aid, and comfort to them; to afford patronage and succour to right; to minister encouragement, support and defence to virtue; *remembring that we have also a Lord in heaven*, and a Judge, to whom we must be ^{Eph. 6. 9.} accountable. Hath God vouchsafed us any parts, any wit, any knowledge? this should move us to employ them not so much in contriving projects to advance our own petty interests, or in procuring vain commendation to our selves, as in setting forth God's praise, in recommending goodness, in drawing men with the most advantage we can to the practice of virtue and piety. Hath God conferred on us any thing of honour, or credit among men? this may oblige us not to build high conceits upon it, or to find vain complacencies therein, but to use it as an instrument of bringing honour to God, of ministring aid or countenance to the interests of piety: to those purposes, I say, this consideration greatly serveth; for that it is plainly declared that we are but Stewards of these things, having received them in trust, not to use them according to our pleasure, but to employ them with the best advantage for God's service; and accordingly shall in ^{Matt. 25. 14; 24. 45.} the last judgment be strictly accountable for them; so that if we have embezzled or perverted them to abuse, it will then appear far worse for us, than if we never had received them; much better indeed it will be for us, that we had been the poorest beggars, silliest ideots, most despicable wretches here, than not to have duly improved our wealth, parts and honour to God's service; *To whomsoever* ^{Luke 12. 48.} *much is given, from him much shall be required*, is the rule that punctually in that great Audit will be observed.

5. The consideration of this point may induce us to the observing strict justice and equity in all our dealings: there are in this world many advantages of doing injury and iniquity safely in respect to men, without intrenching upon humane laws, without incurring any check, or any correction from them; they reach to very few cases, they retrench only some great outrages, and punish some enormous crimes, apparently noxious to the peace or welfare of common Society; the stroke of humane law may also (even where it taketh cognizance, where it maketh provision to secure right, or repair wrong) often be evaded by power, or eluded by flight, by gift, by favour: But as the divine law doth extend universally to the prohibition of all iniquity whatever (small as well as great, secret no less than visible) so the divine judgment inevitably will reach to all; the least

Quàm angusta innocentia est ad legem hominum esse? quanto latius officiorum patet, quàm juris regula? Sen. de Ir. 2. 27.

wrongful word, by which we hurt the good name of our neighbour, the least exaction or hard dealing with him, the least over-reaching him by craft (however blameless these things may seem here, however they may pass with commendation, as instances of wit or ability) will surely then be condemned and punished :

1 Thes. 4. 6. *Let no man, saith S. Paul, go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter, sin ἐκ δὲ οὗτος ὁ νόμος ὁ μὲν τῶν τοιούτων, because God will judge and avenge for all these things ;*

2 Cor. 6. 9. *so that (as the same Apostle teacheth us) the unjust, the wrongful, the revilers, the rapacious shall not inherit the Kingdom of God ; that day will detect all wicked fraud and cozenage, will defeat all unjust might and oppression ; no power shall be able to break through, no wit shall skill to decline, no friendship or favour will help to keep off the impartial sentence, and the irresistible stroke of that judgment ; There is no darkness or shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves from being detected, from being prosecuted and punished.*

Job 34. 22. *The poor, the meek, the simple, who rather chuse to suffer than do wrong, shall there find a certain patronage, and a full redress ; that strict abstinence from wrong, which here may pass for simplicity, shall then be approved for the best wisdom ; and this over-reaching craft, which now men are so conceited of, will then appear wretched folly, when all ill gotten profits with shameful regret shall in effect be refunded, yea shall bring grievous damages and sore penalties for them : In fine, then it will be most evident, that he who injureth another, doth indeed chiefly hurt himself ; he that cheateth his neighbour, doth really gull himself, and abuse his own soul.*

6. The consideration of this point is apt to breed Charity in us ; Charity of all sorts ; Charity in giving, Charity in forgiving, Charity in judging and censuring of men.

1. It should incline us freely to impart our goods, and to contribute our endeavours for the relief of our poor neighbour ; for that the last judgment will in especial manner proceed upon a regard to the performance, or the neglect of this duty ; it shall be the *Test* of Piety, and a ground of recompence at the last day. To charitable persons, who had relieved him in his poor brethren, and members, our

Matt. 25. 34. *Lord himself telleth us, that he will say, Because I was hungry, and ye gave me meat ; I was thirsty and ye gave me drink ; I was a stranger and ye took me in ; I was naked and ye clothed me ; I was sick and ye visited me ; I was in prison and ye came unto me ; therefore, Come ye blessed of my Father, enter into the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world : to them, who contrarily had neglected to succour, and comfort their poor brethren, he will pronounce the contrary doom ; Depart from me ye cursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels ; for I was hungry, and ye gave me no meat, &c. and what argument can there be imagined more forcible to engage us on the practice of this duty ?*

14. Ver.

2. It should likewise dispose us readily to forgive all injuries, and discourtesies received from any man ; for since we shall at that trial need abundance of favour and mercy from God, we should in all reason and duty be willing to shew the like to others for God's sake, and at his command ; especially since he hath appointed the doing so for an indispensable condition, without which we shall not receive mercy, or pardon from him ; so that infallibly, if we will be rigorous and hard to others in this case, we must expect the like extremity and severity from God ; for the laws and rules of God's proceeding then are these : *He shall have judgment without mercy, that hath shewed no mercy ; If ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will God forgive you your trespasses :* And by a lively example, in way of history or parable, our Lord in the Gospel hath expressed, what words (in case of our refusing to remit to our neighbour his debts and trespasses

Jam. 2. 13.
Matt. 6. 15.

Matt. 18. 32. *against us) we shall hear, what usage we shall find at that day ; O thou wicked servant (will God say to any such unmerciful person of us) I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me, shouldst not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow servant, even as I had pity on thee ? And the Lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that is due unto him.*

3. It likewise serveth to restrain us from all undue, all rash and harsh censure concerning the persons, the actions, the state of our neighbour ; whereby we do invade our Lord's office, making our selves Judges in his room ; whereby we usurp his right, exercising jurisdiction over his Subjects ; whereby we arrogate to our selves his Attributes, who alone is able to know, and judge rightly ; *Why,* saith

S. Paul,

S. Paul dost thou judge thy brother, or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? We shall all stand at the judgment-seat of Christ. It is the office of Christ, which we must not encroach upon; and, Who art thou (doth he again expostulate) that judgest another's servant? to his own Master he standeth or falleth; we wrong our Lord, in assuming authority over his servants; we wrong our brethren, in making our selves their masters; and, judge nothing before the time, saith the same Apostle, until the Lord come, who shall enlighten the hidden things of darkness, and manifest the counsels of hearts. We blind wretches in effect do make our selves Gods, and sacrilegiously assert his incommunicable perfections to our selves, when we presume to search the hearts, or pretend to know the secret intentions of our brethren: Again, There is (saith another Apostle) one Lawgiver, who can save or destroy; who art thou that judgest another? that is, how intolerably rash, unjust and arrogant art thou, who seatest thy self upon God's tribunal, and thence dost adventure to pronounce doom upon his people? Did we indeed well consider this Judgment, we should rather think it advisable to be mindful of our own case, than to pass sentence upon that of others; observing how liable our selves are, we should scarce have the heart to carp at others; finding what great need our actions will then have of favourable interpretation, we should surely be more candid, and mild in censuring other mens actions; especially considering, that by harsh Judgment of others, we make our own case worse, and enflame our reckoning; we directly thence incur guilt, we aggravate our own offences, and render our selves inexcusable; we expose our selves upon that score to condemnation; for, With what judgment we judge we shall be judged; and with what measure we mete, it shall be measured to us again, our Lord doth say: and, Inexcusable, saith S. Paul, thou art O man, whoever thou art that judgest; for wherein thou judgest another thou condemnest thy self: and, μη σενδίζετε κατ' ἀλλήλων, Do not (saith S. James) grudge (or make meanful complaint) against one another, lest you be condemned; behold the Judge standeth before the doors.

Rom. 14. 20.
Rom. 14. 4.

James 4. 12.

Mat. 7. 2.
Luke 6. 37.

Rom. 2. 1, 3.

Jam. 5. 9.

7. It serves also to support and comfort us as against all other wrongful dealing, so against injuries of this kind; against all unjust and uncharitable censures, groundless slanders and surmises, undeserved scorns and reproaches of men; for that assuredly at that judgment right will be done to him, that suffereth in this kind; his innocence will be cleared, his good name will be vindicated and repaired: God will bring forth his righteousness as the light, and his judgment as the noon day; whence approving his conscience to God in well doing, he may cheerfully say with S. Paul, With me it is a very small thing, that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment. If our heart do not condemn us, we may (whatever the opinions or discourses of man be concerning us) have a cheerful boldness, and comfortable hope in regard to God: the obloquy of men is a part of that cross, which every good man here is appointed to bear, and assuredly shall meet with; for the Devil and the World do nothing, if they cannot by impudent assaults dash, or by malicious suggestions blast the practice of goodness; but this consideration may easily raise us to bear it with patience, or with resolution to surmount it, it thence appearing, that it no-wise can harm us; for if God is our Judge, what can the fancies or the rattles of men concern us? I will not fear the judgment of men, who shall have God for my judge, was with good reason said by S. Hierom.

Καὶ πάντες ἀνέλθουσιν, ὃ δὲ δικαιοσύνην ἀπολύσει, ἐπὶ τοῖς λόγοις τοῦ κυρίου. καὶ ὅτι πάντες ἐπαίνεσθαι καὶ δαυμάσθαι, ἐν οὐκ ἔστιν, ἀλλὰ κατὰ δικαιοσύνην, ἐπὶ τοῖς λόγοις τοῦ κυρίου. Chryl. Tom. 8. p. 58.

Non timebo hominum iudicium, habiturus iudicem Deum. Hier.

8. If upon the like ground should preserve us from being deluded and poisoned by the more favourable opinions of men: there are visibly two great rocks, upon which frequently men do split, and make shipwreck of good conscience, compliance with the practice and regard to the opinions of others; men out of complaisance accompany others in doing ill; it is called good nature, it is deemed good manners to do it, so very civilly and gently, very nobly and gallantly they go on to perdition, giving up their salvation in complement and courtesy to one another; then 'tis but natural for this most debonair and generous dealing to requite one another with good words at least, or with some demonstrations of esteem; and 'tis no less natural for those

Nihil omnino agimus, qui nos per exempla multitudinis defendimus, Et ad consolationem nostram aliena saepe numerantes vitia, deesse nobis dicimus, quos debeamus sequi. Hier.

Quæ est hæc tanta levitas animi, quæ tanta vanitas, relicta propriâ conscientia, alienam opinionem sequi, & quidem fictam atque simulatam, rapti vixit falsa laudationis gaudere ad circumventionem suam, & illusionem pro beneficio accipere? Hier. ad Celantiam.

who are thus flattered to comply with the opinions of others, and to judge of themselves accordingly, thinking themselves good because they are called so; but to keep our selves from being upon such occasions, or upon any the like grounds perniciously cozened, we should consider, that in the great judgment the esteem of men will import nothing of advantage to us: things will pass there as they are in themselves, not

as they are rated here, according to real truth, and intrinsic worth, not according to the conceits or affections of ignorant and partial men; even the things, that appear fairest here, may prove foul there; persons much approved and applauded now, may then be condemned and rejected; for *God seeth not as man seeth, for man looketh on the outward appearance, but God looketh on the heart.* God then will search the hearts, and weigh the spirits of men; he will scan their designs and intentions; he will closely examine their tempers, and exactly poise their circumstances; he will consider many things inscrutable to men, upon which the true worth of persons, and real merit of actions do depend; wherefore most vain and unsafe it is to rely upon the uncertain opinions of men; or to please our selves with them; they neither can out of blindness, or will out of passion, interest, partiality judge truly.

9. If we desire to judge reasonably about our selves, or to know our true state, the only way is to compare our hearts and lives with the law of God, judging our selves by that rule, according to which God will judge us; if we find in our hearts the love of God and goodness (sincere, although imperfect) if we perceive our selves disposed to keep God's commandments (to live piously, righteously and soberly in this world) then may we have a satisfactory hope concerning our state; then we may (as *S. John* saith) have confidence toward God — because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing to him; but if we do not find that mind in us, and that practice; we in conceiting well of our selves upon any other grounds do but flatter, and impose upon our selves; if all the world should account us good, and take us to be in a good case, we should not at all believe them, or mind them; for, *Let no man deceive us; he that doth righteousness, he* (and he alone) *is righteous*, is the most faithful advice, and unquestionable sentence of *S. John*. It is therefore (that by resting on such false bottoms we be not abused, and drawn thence to neglect the amendment of our hearts and ways, in order to our final account) a duty incumbent on us thus to search our hearts and try our ways, and accordingly to judge our selves; the doing which with care and conscience would dispose us to prepare for the judgment we speak of; for *If, saith S. Paul, we would judge our selves, we should not be judged, or not condemned.*

10. The consideration of this point will guard us from infidelity, and from impatience in regard to the providential dispensation of affairs here; considering it, we shall not be offended at passages otherwise unaccountable, and scandalous to providence; we shall not wonder that so many disorders occur in the world, that right is perverted, that fraud and violence do prevail, that vice doth reign: We shall not complain of the adversities incident to good men, nor repine at the prosperities of bad men; we shall not be dissatisfied with any event here befalling our selves or others; since from hence it doth most evidently appear, that all these things are consistent with the wisdom, goodness and justice of God; and do assuredly tend to the declaration of those glorious Attributes; yea that consequently the worst accidents here, if we are faithful to God and to our selves, will finally conduce to our advantage and benefit, according to that of the *Apostle*, *We know that all things work together for good to them that love God.*

11. In fine, there is no consideration able to promise so much efficacy toward the rousing our passions, or duly ordering and settling them upon religious practice: it especially is apt to set on work those two grand Engines and mighty Springs of activity, hope and fear; and with them to raise their respective companions joy and grief: for how, if we have been very culpable in the transgression or neglect of our duty, can we reflect on this point without being seized with an hideous dread of coming to so strict a trial, of falling under so heavy a sentence? how can we think of it without a bitter remorse? hard as rocks surely we must be, if such thoughts do not pierce us; utterly dead and senseless must our hearts

1 Sam. 16. 7.
John 7. 24.
Mat. 11. 3.
Prov. 16. 2.
1 Sam. 2. 3.
Psal. 103. 14.

1 John 3. 21.
22.

1 John 3. 7.
1 Cor. 4. 4.

1 Cor. 3. 31.
Gal. 6. 3.
Psal. 77. 6,
10.

ROM. 8. 28.

heart be, if they do not feel the sting of such considerations; more stupid and stony we then are, than the dissolute *Felix*, who could not without affrightment hear a plain discourse concerning the judgment to come; yea more inconsiderate and insensible we appear, than those obstinate sons of darkness, *the Devils* themselves, who believe and tremble thereat. Acts 24. 25. Εμφοβ. 24. νόθος. James 2. 29.

If on the other hand we are conscious to our selves of having seriously and carefully endeavoured to please God, and obey his commandments, how can we think of it without a comfortable hope of finding mercy and favour in that day? If in our hearts we can say with *S. Paul*, *I have combated the good combat, I have finished* (or *I have continued*) *the race, I have kept the faith*; then may we hopefully say after him, as he said confidently before us, *From henceforth is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which in that day the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall render unto me.* If by virtue of the saving grace of God, which hath appeared to all men, and according to its holy instructions, we have denied ungodliness, and worldly lusts, living soberly, righteously and piously in this present world; then may we joyfully expect the blessed hope, and the appearance of the great God, and our Saviour *Jesus Christ*; then may we indeed heartily wish, cheerfully hope, and earnestly pray for that day; doing which is the character, and hath been the practice of the best men: *The Lord*, saith *S. Paul*, *will render the crown of righteousness to all them who love his appearance*; and, looking for and hastening to the presence of the day of God, saith *S. Peter*, intimating the practice of the primitive Christians; and, *Yea come, O Lord Jesus*, is *S. John's* petition in the close of the *Revelation*, and may be the prayer of those who have the like conscience and affections with him. 2 Tim. 4. 7, 8. 1. 18. Tit. 2. 12, 13. 1 Cor. 1. 7. Phil. 3. 20. Tit. 2. 9. 2 Tim. 4. 8. 2 Pet. 3. 12. Apoc. 22. 20.

I conclude, wishing and exhorting, that the meditation of this most important affair may be continually present to our minds; that we may seem with that devout man always to hear the last trump sounding in our ears, and through our hearts; that so with a pious awe, and with a well grounded hope we may expect the coming of our Lord, and may love his appearance; that from hence being effectually restrained from all impious and vicious conversation, being induced to a circumspect and watchful pursuit of all piety and virtue, guiding our lives inoffensively in all good conscience toward God and Man, we may in the end be able to render a good account; and with comfort unexpressible may at that day from the mouth of our Judge hear those happy words, *Well done good and faithful servants, enter into your Master's joy; Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the World*: Unto the possession whereof Almighty God in his infinite mercy by the grace of his Holy Spirit vouchsafe to bring us, through the merits of our blessed Saviour *Jesus Christ*, to whom for ever be all glory and praise. *Amen.*

- The very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body, may be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord *Jesus Christ*. *Amen.* 1 Thess. 5. 23.

I believe in the Holy Ghost.

SERMON XXXIV.

The Divinity of the Holy Ghost.

1 Cor. III. 16.

Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?



Y purpose is at this time for our edification in Christian knowledge concerning that grand object of our faith, and Author of our salvation, the *Holy Ghost*; and for arming us against erroneous opinions about him, such as have been vented in former ages, and have been revived in this; to explain briefly the name, nature and original of the *Holy Ghost* (according to what appears discovered of him in the sacred Writings;) to consider also the peculiar characters, offices and operations, which (according to the mysterious œconomy revealed in the Gospel) are assigned, and attributed to him; so that incidentally by testimonies of Scripture, and arguments deduced thence, I shall assert the principal doctrines received in the Church, in opposition to the most famously Heterodox Dogmatists that have appeared. For the doing which this Text of *S. Paul* doth minister good occasion; for the full explication thereof doth require a clearing of the particulars mentioned, and it self affordeth good arguments against the principal errors about this matter. His being called the Spirit of God may engage us to consider his nature and original; his being said to dwell in us, doth imply his personality; his divinity appears in that Christians are called the Temple of God, because the *Holy Ghost* dwelleth in them; his sanctifying virtue may be inferred from his constituting us temples, by his presence in us. I shall then in order prosecute the points mentioned; and lastly shall adjoin somewhat of practical application.

1. *First* then for the Name of the Holy Spirit; whereby also his nature and origine are intimated.

Of those things, which do not immediately incur our sight, but do by conspicuous effects discover their existence, there is scarce any thing in substance more pure and subtile, in motion more quick and nimble, in efficacy more strong and powerful, than wind (or spirit.) Hence in common use of most languages the name of wind or spirit doth serve to express those things, which from the subtilty or tenuity of their nature being indiscernable to us, are yet conceived to be moved with great perniciousity, and to be endued with great force: so Naturalists we see are wont to name that which in any body is most abstruse, most agile, and most operative in Spirit: Hence it comes that this word is transferr'd to denote those substances, which are free of matter, and removed from sense, but are endued (as with understanding, so) with a very powerful activity, and virtue: Even among the Pagans these sort of Beings were called *Spirits*: The souls of men are by them so termed; (*anima* hath its derivation from ἀνεμος, wind.) Our life (saith Cicero) is

contained by (or comprized in) body and Spirit: And, We (saith he again) are at the same time received into the light, and endued with this heavenly spirit (that is, with our soul.) Particularly the Stoicks used to apply this name to our soul: I alledge the Stoicks (saith Tertullian) who call the soul a spirit, almost therein agreeing with us Christians. They likewise frequently did attribute this appellation to God:

Vita corpore, & spiritu continetur.
Cic. Or. pro Mar.

*Eodem tempore suscipimur in lucem, &
hoc cœlesti spiritu augemur.* De Arusp.
resp.

*Stoicos allego, qui spiritum dicunt ani-
mam, penè nobiscum.* Tert. de Anim. 5.

*Cælum & terram camposque liquentes,
Lucentemque globum terræ, Titaniaque astra
Spiritus intus agit —*

Æn. 6.

said the Prince of their Poets ; by the word *Spirit* understanding (as *Lactantius* *Lact.* 1. 5. and *Macrobius* do interpret him) God himself, that pierceth and acteth all things ; yea he so elsewhere expoundeth his own mind, when he to the same purpose sings,

*— Deum ire per omnes
Terrasque tractusque maris, cælumque profundum.*

Georg. 4.

And the Orator, in his *Dialogues*, maketh *Balbus* to speak thus : *These things truly could not, all the parts of the world so conspiring together, be so performed, if they were not contained (or kept together) by one divine and continued Spirit : and Seneca clearly ; God (saith he) is nigh to thee, he is with thee, he is in thee : I tell thee (O Lucilius) a Holy Spirit resideth within us, an observer and guardian of our good and our bad things (or doings) who as he hath been dealt with by us, so he dealeth with us ; there is no good man (or no man is good) without God : and, Zeno defined God thus ; God is a Spirit, passing through the whole world : Posidonius also more largely ; God is an intellectual and fiery Spirit, not having shape ; but changing into what things he will, and assimilated to all things.*

Hæc ita fieri omnibus inter se continentibus mundi partibus profectò non possent, nisi ea uno, & divino continuato spiritu continerentur. De Nat. D. II. p. 60.

Prope est à te Deus, tecum est, intus est ; ita dico, Lucili, sacer intra nos spiritus sedet, malorumque bonorumque nostrorum observator, & hic prout à nobis tractatus est, ita nos ipse tractat ; bonus vir sine Deo non est. Sen. Ep. 41.

Θεός ἐστὶ πνεῦμα, διήκων δι' ὅλης τῆς κόσμου. Zeno.

Θεός ἐστὶ πνεῦμα νοερόν, καὶ πυρώδες, καὶ ἔχον μαρτυρίαν, μεταβάλλον δ' εἰς ὃ βέλλει, καὶ ἐξομοιωθὲν παντί. Posid. apud Stob.

In like manner hence the Holy Scriptures with regard to our capacity and manner of conceiving, do with the same appellation adumbrate all those kind of substances, void of corporeal bulk and concretion ; human Souls, all the angelical Natures, and the incomprehensible Deity it self. And to God indeed this name is attributed, to signify his most simple nature, and his most powerful energy ; but to other substances of this kind it seemeth also assigned to imply the manner of their origin ; because God did by a kind of spiration produce them ; for which cause likewise (at least in part) we may suppose, that the Holy Scripture doth more signally and in a peculiar manner assign that name to one Being, that most excellent Being, which is the subject of our present discourse ; the which is called the Spirit of God (that is of God the Father, who by reason of his priority of nature is often called God in a personal signification) the good Spirit of God ; the Spirit of Christ ; the Holy Spirit ; and often absolutely in way of excellence, the Spirit.

The same is also called the Power or Virtue of God ; about the reason of which appellation we may briefly observe, that whereas in every intellectual being there are conceived to be three principal faculties, will, understanding, efficacy ; and correspondent to these three perfections, Goodness, Wisdom, Power ; a certain one of these (according to that mystical œconomy or husbandry of Notions, whereby the manner and order of subsisting and operation, proper to each person in the blessed Trinity, is insinuated) is in a certain manner appropriated to each person (so I now by anticipation speak, being to warrant these terms hereafter) namely to the Father it is ascribed, that he freely decreeth what things should be done ; to the Son, that he disposeth them in a most wise method and order toward their effecting ; to the Holy Ghost, that he with a powerful force doth execute and effect them : whence as God is said, according to his pleasure, to decree and determine things [and τὸ θέλημα, the will, is a name by some Writers assigned to him ; particularly *Ignatius* doth in his Epistles frequently so stile him ; and so *S. Paul* may be understood, where he saith : καὶ γνώσκεις τὸ θέλημα, *And thou knowest the will ;* that is, knowest God the Father ; and *S. Peter*, *For it is better, that ye* (καὶ θέλει τὸ θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ) *if the will of God pleaseth, do suffer for well doing, than for evil doing*] as the Son is called the wisdom of God, so the Holy Spirit is named the power of God ; his substantial-power, as we shall shew. To this Being, what-

Rom. 2. 13.

1 Pet. 3. 17.

Luke 1. 35.

24. 49.

ever it is, 'tis manifest that properly and primarily the name of Holy Spirit is appropriated ; but (which we should consider) from thence (as is usual in other cases and matters) by figurative deflection of speech (or by metonymy) the manner of that operation which that Holy Spirit doth exert, his influence and efficacy, and

and also any sort of effects proceeding from him, do commonly assume, or partake of this name. So when from this Spirit, in a very conspicuous manner, an excellent virtue of performing miraculous works, was liberally imparted to the apostles, that virtue (or the manifest communication thereof, *the manifestation of the Spirit*, as S. Paul calleth it) is named the Holy Ghost: as when in S. John's Gospel it is said, *The Holy Spirit was not yet*, that is, the Apostles had not yet received that excellent Gift; or that marvellous efficacy of the Holy Spirit had not yet discovered it self in them; as also when in the Acts some Disciples are said *not to have heard whether there were any Holy Spirit*; that is, they were not acquainted concerning that peculiar efficacy thereof. When also there are mentioned the Spirit of prophecy, the Spirit of revelation, the Spirit of wisdom (which sort of Spirits are said to be encreased, to be taken away, to be quenched) it is plain, that by those phrases not the Holy Spirit of God it self (which in no sense is liable to such accident) but gifts, fruits or effects thereof are denoted; some of which sometimes are in the plural number called *πνεύματα*, Spirits; as when S. Paul enjoineth the *Corinthians* to be *Zealous* (or earnestly desirous) of *Spirits*, that is of spiritual gifts, or graces, or revelations; and when *the discerning of Spirits* (that is, of divine revelations, true or counterfeit) is said to be granted to some; and where *the Spirits of Prophets* are said to be subject or subordinate to *Prophets* (that is, one Prophet had a right, and ability to judge about the revelations made to another, or pretended to be so) but these, and the like figurative senses being excluded, we discourse about the Holy Spirit in its most proper and primary sense, as it is in and from God.

Which things being premised concerning the Name of the Holy Spirit; for explication of his Nature,

I. We do first assert, that it is a being in some sense truly distinct from the Father and the Son; hereby rejecting the opinion of *Sabellius*, *Noetus*, *Hermogenes* and *Praxeas*; which confounding the Father, Son and Holy

ὅτι μήτε τῷ Σαβελλίῳ νόσον ἡσέον λαβεῖν. συγχέοντες ἃς ἁποστάτων εἶναι ἃς ἰδιότητων διακρίναι. *Patres Conc. Constant. Epist. ad Conc. Rom. Theod. 5. 9.*

Ghost, and destroying their substantial properties, did of them all make but one person, under several names; affirming *ἐν αὐτῷ ἁποστάσει τρεῖς ὀνομασίαι*, in one person three appellations, and making *τὴν τριάδα συναλαφῶς* the Trinity to be a coincidence, as

Epiphanius speaks. [I said, truly distinct; for this word *distinction* is by the Schoolmen conceived more commodiously applied to this mystery, than others of near signification; those of diversity and difference seeming to intimate somewhat pre-

In divinis vitare debemus nomen diversitatis, Et differentie, possumus autem uti nomine distinctionis, propter oppositionem relativam. *Thom.*

Διδιασκεπάζοντες εἰδέναι μόνον. μὴ δόξα ἐν ταυτῇ περὶ συνωνυμίας, ἀλλὰ εἰδέναι ἔχουσαν καὶ τὴν διαίρεσιν, καὶ τὴν ἑνωσιν. *Naz. Or. 23.*

Apud Aug. persona sæpe diversa dicuntur.

judicial to the unity of essence; *In divinis* (in the mystery of the Trinity) we must, saith *Aquinas*, avoid the name of *diversity*, and of *difference*, but we may use the name of *distinction*, because of the relative opposition: which caution yet the ancient Fathers do not so precisely observe; for sometimes in them *περὶ ὁμοίων ἐπερῆς* and *διαφοράς* (the diversity and difference of the persons) sometimes also the word *διαίρεσις*, the division of them do occur; although they seem more willingly to use the word *διακρίσις*, distinction; that which we simply affirm

is, that the Father, Son and Holy Ghost *τῶν ἰδιότητων διακρίνονται*, are distinguished in properties (as *Greg. Nyssen* speaks) are *ἄλλοι καὶ ἄλλοι*, (as *Greg. Naz.* says) that is, truly more than in mere name or conception distinguished by their properties and relations.]

The Holy Ghost is, I say, truly distinct from the Father, and the Son; this we shall first shew separately. then jointly in regard to both.

He is distinguished from the Father; for,

1. He is called the *Spirit of the Father*; which relation surely is not devised by fancy, or wants a real foundation; and therefore its terms are truly distinct. *1 Cor. 2. 10, 11, &c.*
2. The Holy Spirit is said *ἐκπορεύεται*, that is to *go out*, or proceed from the Father; he is therefore another from him; for a thing cannot be deemed really to proceed from another, from which it only is distinguished in name or conceit. *John 15. 26.*
3. It is also said to be sent, conferr'd, given by the Father; which surely argueth some kind of true distinction. *John 14. 26.*
4. Divers things are attributed to the Spirit, which do not well agree to the Father; as particularly that he appeared *εἰς αὐτὸ σωματικῶς*, in a *bodily form*; that he descended, and rested upon our Lord, the *Baptist* beholding him; *I saw* (saith S. John) *the Spirit descending as a Dove, and it abode on him.* *Gal. 4. 6.*

Luke 3. 33.
John 1. 32, 33.

But,

But, God the Father, no man (saith S. John) ever saw; nor (addeth S. Paul) can any man see him. 5. The Holy Spirit is our advocate with God, crying in our hearts, and interceding with the Father for us (*ὑποστητὴς ἡμῶν*, saith S. Paul) that office, that act does manifestly suppose a true distinction.

For like reasons he is also distinguished from the Son; for, 1. He is called the Spirit of the Son; and that relation implies a real ground. 2. He is sent by the Son; *ἰδὲ ἐν ἀποστόλῃ, Behold* (saith our Lord) *I send him*: And, *If I go not away, the comforter will not come unto you, but if I depart, I will send him unto you.* 3. He descended upon Christ, and abode on him; he filled him, he led or acted him; he anointed him; by his operation Christ did assume flesh; wherefore he is distinguished from the Son. 4. Christ plainly distinguishes between speaking against the Son, and blaspheming against the Holy Ghost; which supposes them two objects. 5. The Holy Ghost is said to receive from the Son that which he should tell to Christ's Disciples, and thence to glorify the Son. 6. The Son did, and suffered many things personally, which cannot agree, and cannot be attributed to the Holy Ghost, as that he was incarnated, and assumed man's nature; that he suffered, rose again, ascended into heaven. 7. He is expressly said to be distinct from the Son: *I* (saith he) *will ask the Father, and he will give you another comforter.* So separately may the Holy Spirit be shewed distinct from each; and jointly in several places that distinction is signified. For to those three, by a constant economy, a certain order is assigned, some proper offices, and peculiar energies are ascribed; which it is not reasonable to think done without a real foundation; *By Christ* (saith S. Paul) *we have an access in one Spirit to the Father.* Why must we proceed by this circuit, in this certain method, if the Father, Son and Holy Ghost are only distinguished in name? Wherefore also doth the same Apostle bless thus: *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.* To what end also doth he distinctively assign a peculiar dispensation of operations to the Father, of ministeries to the Son, of gifts to the Holy Ghost? wherefore likewise doth S. Peter ascribe our election to the Father predestinating, to the Son propitiating, to the Holy Ghost sanctifying? Doth it agree to the gravity, simplicity and sincerity of the divine Oracles, so in a perpetual tenour to propound those three, as three, divers not only in names, but in reality, in manner of being, in manner of operation, if there be no other under all but a nominal, or notional distinction? what would this be but not only to yield us an occasion, but to impose a necessity of erring? shall we think those principal masters of truth purposely argue, perplexed and obscure in their speech? Farthermore, S. John affirms in his first Epistle (at least if there the text be authentic) that *there are three which bare witness in heaven, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit*; the which also undoubtedly (although not so conjoinedly, as in his Epistle) he assures in his Gospel; for, *I am he*, saith Christ, *who bear witness of my self, and the Father, which sent me, beareth witness of me; and, when the comforter shall come, he will bear witness of me*: so there are, we see, three witnesses, which our Lord appealeth to; but three names (as for instance, *Marcus, Tullius, Cicero*) or the same thing having three names, will not constitute three witnesses. In fine, the form of Baptism evinceth this distinction; for at our Baptism we profess to acknowledge the Father, Son and Holy Ghost; we perform worship, and promise obedience to them all; which doing *Sabellius* would have us do, as if subjects should be required to oblige their Faith to *Caius, Julius, and Cæsar*; which kind of proceeding it seems absurd to suppose, that God should solemnly institute. This may be sufficient to overthrow the *Sabellian* error.

II. Again, we affirm the Holy Spirit to be a person. By a person we understand a singular, subsistent, intellectual being; or (as *Boethius* defines it) *an individual substance of a rational nature*. The Greek Writers use the word *ὑποστάσις* (which word being of wider signification, doth comprehend also things void of understanding, importing) substance, concretely taken, or a thing subsistent (*ὑποστάσις*) which term is extant in the Scripture, where the Son of God in respect to his Father is called *ἡ οὐσία τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ* (the character of his substance or person) whence there was less cause that S. Hierom and other Latin antient Writers should so avoid, or timidly admit the word *hypostasis*; as fearing that by use thereof they should seem to acknowledge three essences; seeing (as S. Austin notes) according to most common acception substance denoted the same with essence;

Unde non au-
demus dicere
unam essenti-
am, tres sub-
stantias, sed
unam essenti-
am (vel sub-
stantiam) tres
personas.
Naz. Orat.
39. 32.

essence; whence, saith he, we dare not say one essence, three substances; but one essence (or substance) three persons; but this (as Gregory Nazianzen did consider) was nothing else, but *περὶ λαξενδιῶν συμμαχεῖν*; to contest about syllables; or *πρὸς ἡχοὺς μαχεσθῆναι*, to mince about sounds; seeing whether we call it person or substance, we mean the same thing. We however affirming the Holy Spirit to be a person, do thereby intend to exclude the opinion of Socinus and his followers, which asserts the Holy Spirit to be only an accident, or an accidental thing; to wit, a divine power, virtue or efficacy, resident in God, or derived from him.

1. Now this we perswade first from those things, which we before did shew concerning the distinction of the Father and the Holy Spirit; for that slender (or rather no) distinction, such as may be conceived to be between any being and its efficacy (especially in this case, attending to the most simple nature of God, and his most simple manner of acting) doth not well reach the business, nor doth suffice to found that distinction, which the Scripture doth (as we shewed) constitute between the Father and Holy Spirit. Indeed Socinus as to this point (however it be, that he sometimes objecteth Sabellianism to the Catholics) doth scarce himself differ from Sabellius: for Sabellius himself did avow the Son and Holy Spirit to be divers energies of the Father, and that they are distinguished from him as Light and Heat from the Sun, which did not hinder the Fathers from refuting him, as putting no true distinction between them; as indeed God in the thing it self (or beyond the manner of our conception and expression) is not distinguished from his power and efficacy.

2. Again, this may be collected from the very name of Spirit, the which primarily is imposed upon substances, both corporeal and incorporeal; belonging to God essentially understood, to Angels, to human Souls, all which things are substances: whence it is probable, that to the Being, of which we treat, because it in like manner is a substance, this name of Spirit is assigned by God, the best Author of words; the epithet Holy being adjoined for distinction sake. This is confirmed from that whereas God is essentially *is a Spirit* (as is expressed in S. John's Gospel) his efficacy cannot aptly assume the same name; as because our Soul is essentially a Spirit, it were incongruous to call any virtue thereof a Spirit. The same is farther hence confirmed, for that the evil Spirit, which is opposed to the good Spirit of God, is not an efficacy of God, but a subsistent Being; which argueth the good Spirit also to be likewise subsistent. The same is corroborated from the Apostle's comparing the Spirit of God to that Spirit, which being in man doth search and discern his inward counsels and purposes; but the Spirit of man is a substantial thing; wherefore 'tis intimated, that correspondently the Spirit of God is such a Being. We add to these things, that power, virtue, efficacy are ascribed to the Holy Spirit; that you may (saith S. Paul) abound in hope by the power of the Holy Ghost; but that power should be attributed unto power, or efficacy to efficacy, is not congruous.

John 4. 24.
1 Sam. 16. 14.
1 Cor. 2. 10.
Rom. 15. 13.

3. The Holy Scripture (to whose speech it becometh us to sate our conceptions) doth commonly describe the Holy Spirit as a person, enjoying personal titles, offices, attributes, and operations; and those such which neither in sound or sense do agree to mere efficacy.

1. Speaking of the Holy Ghost, it purposely and carefully (as it were) doth accommodate the article agreeing to a person: Not it but he is the article commonly assigned to the Spirit; and that with marks of doing it studiously: *ὅταν ἔλθῃ*

John 16. 13. *ἐνέινθῃ, τὸ πνεῦμα ὁ ἀληθὺς*, when he (in the masculine gender) comes, the spirit of
14. 26. 15. 2. *truth* (in the neuter) 'tis said in S. John's Gospel: and *τὸ ὅς δὲ ἐδὲς οἶδεν* (none,
6. in the masculine gender again, knoweth the things of God, but the Spirit of God)
1 Cor. 2. 11. why, otherwise beside analogy of Grammar, should the stile be so tempered or inflicted, but to insinuate the Holy Spirit's personality? If he were nothing else but the virtue of God, there were no need, or rather it would be inconvenient, so to phrase it.

2. Again, the Scripture attributes personal offices to the Holy Spirit; the office of a Master (He shall teach you) of a Leader, or Guide (He shall lead you in-
John 14. 16. to all truth) of a Monitor (He shall bring all things to your remembrance) of a
John 16. 13. Witness (He shall testify concerning me) yea, which more strongly evinceth, of a
John 15. 26. Legate, who declareth God's mind, not as from himself, but as deputed and furnished with Instructions from the Father and the Son: He shall not (tis said)
speak

He shall speak from himself; but whatever things he shall hear, he shall speak; and he will tell you things to come: All things that the Father hath, are mine; therefore, said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you: Which expressions do in no sort well agree to the divine power, or efficacy, but evidently respect a person; for what is performed by any agent, to say that of its efficacy, as distinct from it, is beside the reason and manner of Speech; and doth especially disagree with the nature and genius of the divine Scripture, which undertaketh most simply and plainly to instruct us. That God's efficacy should be sent from the Father and Son; that it should speak, that it should hear from the Father and the Son, how strangely hard and obscure a manner of speaking is that? from them, not from himself: what *himself* can they imagine, who distinguish him not from God, and allow him no personality? why should we without necessity asperse the Holy Scripture, made clearly to instruct us, with such mistyness and darkness? Likewise to the Holy Spirit is attributed the office of a Paraclete, or advocate, who pleadeth our cause with God, praying and interceding with God for us: but that God's efficacy (which can hardly be conceived, which should not be conceived distinct from God) should speak to God, should interpose it self between us, is, as the rest, too perplex'd and intricate a saying.

3. Farthermore, the Holy Scripture doth to the Holy Spirit attribute faculties and operations annexed to him plainly personal: such are Understanding (*the Spirit searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God: The things of God none knoweth, but the Spirit of God*) Will (*He divideth to every one as he willeth*) Affections; of Grief (*Grieve not the Holy Spirit*) and Anger (*They provoked his Holy Spirit*) Sense (*what he shall hear, he will speak*) Speech, there and in many other places: (*It is not you, saith our Saviour, that speak, but the spirit of your Father that is in you:* and, *The Spirit said, separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them;* and again, very emphatically; *while Peter thought on the vision, the Spirit said unto him, behold three men seek thee.*) Now these and the like faculties and acts are clearly personal; not representing any quality, or energy, but a lively and intellectual substance. To interpret all these things as spoken by fiction or dramatically, what is it but to transform God's oracles into Pythian riddles, and of Theology to frame a Mythology? that sometime for emphasis sake, in matters less dark or high, the Holy Scripture may sometime use such schemes, nothing I confess doth hinder; but that perpetually it should involve such a most grave and sublime matter with such *tortuous* forms of speech, doth in truth not seem consentaneous to its most holy and simple Majesty: As more simple, more clearly and more intelligibly, so more compendiously it might have been said, God knoweth, God willeth, God is thus or thus affected, God speaketh; than, God's virtue knoweth, God's power willeth, God's efficacy speaketh; if these manners of speech did not otherwise differ, at least the former would be more clear, simple and expedite, nor would it so yield occasion to errors and doubts; and therefore more worthy it would be of the Holy Writ. However such Prosopopœia's should not be inept, but such as most appositely should agree to the matter proposed, which would not happen in this case; for of those personal attributes some at least do scarce admit those figurate senses, or do plainly refuse them; 'tis hard to say that a divine power doth know, or hear; and who will say that a divine efficacy is affected with anger, or sorrow?

I add, that when the sin of blasphemy is said to be committed against the Holy Spirit just in the same form of speech as against the Son, it is signified that the Holy Spirit is in the same manner a person as the Son is a person; otherwise the comparison would not seem to be well framed.

4. The Holy Spirit in the same manner, and by like right as the Father and Son, is the object of our faith, worship, obedience; the which as by divers other ways (as afterwards we may shew) so especially doth appear from the form of Baptism instituted and prescribed by our Lord; where we as well are baptized into the name of the Holy Spirit, as of the Father and Son; wherein is signified, and by a solemn contestation ratified, on the part of God, that those three joined and confederated (as it were) are conspiringly propitious and favourable to us; that they do receive us into their discipline, grace and patronage; that they are ready, and by virtue of promise in a manner bound, to bestow on us excellent benefits and privileges (on us, I say, performing the laws and conditions of the

covenant then entred into) On our part, that we do with sound and firm faith equally (that is thorowly and entirely) acknowledge and confess those three; that we repose an equal (that is a most firm) hope and confidence in them; that we do most highly reverence all and each of them; that we do sincerely and seriously undertake and promise a perpetual (and nearest, to what we are able, a

Εἰ δὲ μὴ εἴσι τέλειοι χριστιανοὶ οἱ κατη-
χούμενοι πρὶν ἢ βαπτισθῶσι, βαπτισθέντες
ὅτι τελειύονται τὸ βαπτισμα ἀρχαίως ἐστὶ
τὴ προσκυνήσας. Athan. Dial. I. con-
tra Maced. p. 265.

perfect) obedience to them: doing which things, we do (as *Athanasius*, or an ancient Writer under his name observeth) yield more than a simple adoration to the Holy Spirit: (Since faith he, *they that are catechized in order to Baptism, are not before they are Baptized, perfect Christians, but being Baptized are*

consummated; Baptism therefore imports more than adoration) Hence who sees not in this first and principal mystery of our religion the Holy Spirit is exhibited to us as a person, that about him as such this excellent part of our duty, this eximious worship is conversant? Attending to this point we may also see the adverse opinion to be urged with many inconveniences: for if the Holy Spirit be not a person, not aptly (or rather very incongruously) he is put into the same rank with the other two persons; not rightly are things so wholly differing in kind (things subsistent and not subsistent) conjoined, and just in the same form proposed as like objects of worship; yea superfluously and to no purpose doth the Holy Spirit seem to be adjoined, if by it nothing beside the divine efficacy is designed: for acknowledging the Father, we do withal acknowledge his power and efficacy, congruous to the divine nature; worshipping the Father, we do together adore his power; devoting our selves in obedience to the Father, we do likewise subject our selves to his power: as if one hath promised faith and loyalty to the King, he therein hath abundantly satisfied his duty; so that there is no farther need to profess himself devoted to the King's power or efficacy: who sees not that in such a case it is superfluous and idle to sever the King from his royal power? One may also ask, why with as good reason we should not be consecrated into the name of the divine goodness, of the divine justice, of the divine wisdom, or of any other divine attribute, as into the name of the divine power? The Socinian exposition therefore doth cast strange clouds and incongruities upon this august mystery; which yet in decency should be most clearly and simply propounded, lest in the very entrance of our Christian profession an occasion should be given of stumbling into great error.

* Ἐν εἰδήσῳ-
ματικῷ, in a
bodily shape, as
it is said in
the Gospel.

5. The personality of the Holy Ghost is also perspicuously evinced, from its being represented under the visible shape of a subsistent * thing. A substantial thing is no proper symbol, or representative of a thing accidental; nor commodiously may assume its name: to a thing having no subsistence it doth not well sute to descend like a Dove, and to rest upon Christ: supposing the Spirit were only the efficacy of God the Father, seeing the effects of faculties and operations are most aptly attributed to the persons having or exerting them, it could have been said (and that more rightly and properly) that the Father himself did appear in a corporeal figure, that the Father descended, that the Father sat upon Christ, that the Father was seen by the Holy Baptist; the which it were rash to affirm.

Cur non hic accipiamus visibilibus insi-
gniam per creaturam visibilem Trinita-
tis aequalitatem, atque in tribus personis
unum, eandemque substantiam. Aug. de
Trin. 2. 11, 12.

I forbear to alledge, that the Holy Spirit is reckoned among the three that bear witness in heaven; that the sin against the Holy Ghost is distinguished from the sin against God the Father. I also pass over, that a Trinity of Persons (as many of the Fathers conceive) was represented in the appa-

Gen. 18. 1. rition to *Abraham*, where it is said, *The Lord appeared*, and *Three men appeared to him*; as also that the Hymn [*Trisagias*] (in *Esay* and the *Apocalypse*) does insinuate it likewise that the phrases *Creavit Elohim* (*Gods* in the plural, did create in the singular) *Faciamus hominem*, *let us make man*; *Jehovah Elohim*, *the Lord our Gods*; and the like may well hither be referred. For from what hath been said, the Socinian error may seem abundantly confuted.

III. We thirdly now assert (supposing his personality) that the Holy Spirit is God, coessential to God the Father, and God the Son; or that the one divine nature (with all its attributes and perfections) is common to him with the Father; or that (which is the same) the Holy Spirit is God, that most High God, most absolute and properly so called (for, seeing the Holy Scriptures do frequently incul-

cate that there is but one God, if the Holy Spirit be God, he must necessarily be coessential to the Father and the Son.) Now that he is God, we against the Macedonians, or Semi-Arians, do assert, and by these Arguments prove :

I. The most proper names of God, and the most divine titles are every where (according to just interpretation, and by perspicuous consequence) attributed unto the Holy Spirit : inasmuch as often (almost ever) upon various occasions the same words, works and acts are referr'd to God and the Holy Spirit ; so that whatever God is said to have spoken, to have performed, to have made, that also is reported, said, transacted, produced by the Holy Ghost ; and reciprocally, whatever doth any way regard the Holy Spirit, that is referr'd to God ; the which doth argue, that between the beings denoted by the names God and Holy Spirit an essential identity, or unity doth interceed. Of the *Israelites* being wickedly incredulous and refractory it is said : *They tempted and provoked the most High God, and kept not his testimonies* ; the same *Esay* thus expresseth : *They rebelled, and vexed his Holy Spirit.* In *Esay* (6. 9.) God is said to send the Prophets ; St. Paul reporting it saith, the Holy Ghost sent them. S. Peter chargeth *Ananias*, that he had lied to the Holy Spirit ; and thence that he had lied to God : *Ananias* (saith he) *why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie unto the Holy Ghost ?* presently he subjoins, *Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God* ; he plainly by those names designeth the same things, and more than intimates it to be the same thing to lie to God, and to lie to the Spirit. Our Lord as man was conceived by the Holy Ghost, and for that reason was the Son of God : *The Holy Ghost* (said the Angel) *shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee ; therefore that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.* What consequence were there of this, if the Holy Ghost is not God ? Our Lord is also said to have performed his miracles by the Power of God, and by the Power of the Holy Spirit indifferently : *If I* (saith he in S. Matthew) *by the spirit of God cast out Devils* : In S. Luke he saith ; *If I by the Finger* (that is by the Power) *of God cast out Devils* ; and both Phrases S. Paul doth equipollently express by *the Power of the Holy Ghost* : and S. Peter says, that *God did the miracles by him.* The Holy Scripture, because dictated by the Holy Spirit, is said to be *inspired*, or *inspired by God.* *The Spirit spake in the Prophets* (saith S. Peter, and the other holy Writers commonly) *God spake in them*, saith the Apostle to the *Hebrews*, and others likewise, so often as the Holy Scripture is called the word of God. The Holy Spirit doth shed abroad and work charity in our hearts ; we are thence said to be *taught by God* to love one another ; yea every virtue, all holiness is promiscuously ascribed to God and the Holy Ghost as its immediate authors : *To be led by the Spirit of God*, and *God worketh in us to will and to do*, do signifie the same thing. Every faithful Christian is therefore called a temple (that is a place consecrated to God) because the Holy Spirit in a special manner is present in him : *Know ye not, that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you ?* (saith S. Paul in our Text) know ye not that ye are God's temple ? whence should we know it ? from hence, that God's Spirit inhabiteth you, because the inhabitation of the Spirit is the same with the inhabitation of God. The same Apostle again : *In whom ye are also builded together for an habitation of God thro' the Spirit* ; for an habitation of God in the Spirit, that is therefore an habitation of God, because the Spirit dwelleth in you ; how could the Divinity of the Holy Spirit be more expressly declared ? we may add that S. Paul calleth the Holy Spirit, *Lord* ; *but the Lord is that Spirit* ; which Spirit in the words immediately following is called *the Spirit of the Lord* ; the which also before (as S. Chrysostom noteth) is called *the Spirit of the living God* : the Spirit therefore of the Lord is the Lord himself, unto whom the Jews, when the veil covering their minds is taken off, shall return. (Lastly, S. John affirms *the Father, Son and Holy Spirit to be one* ; and therefore the Holy Ghost is God.)

Hence (for corollary to this argument) we see how we may retund the importunity of the *Macedonians*, who did nothing but ask where in Scripture the Holy Ghost is called God : where say you is he called God ? where not, say I ? almost every where he in effect is so called : seeing when all about in the same deed, or in the same history, the same words and acts are reported of *Cæsar* and of the Emperor, it may rightly be pronounced, that *Cæsar* is there called Emperor ; which

Psal. 78. 56.
Isa. 63. 10.

Acts 28. 25.

Acts 5. 3, 4.

Luc. 1. 35.

Matt. 12. 28.

Luke 11. 19.

Rom. 15. 19.

Acts 2. 22.

2 Tim. 3. 16.

1 Pet. 1. 11.

Heb. 1. 1.

2 Pet. 1. 21.

Luke 1. 70.

&c.

Rom. 5. 5.

1 Thes. 4. 8,

9.

Rom. 8. 14.

Phil. 2. 13.

2 Cor. 3. 16,

17. 6. 19.

2 Cor. 6. 16.

Rom. 8. 9.

Eph. 2. 22.

2 Cor. 3. 17.

&c.

1 John 5. 7.

Dial. advers.

Maced. apud

Athan.

which no man, I suppose, will contradict. The case is here plainly the same between the Holy Spirit and God.

2. To the Holy Spirit are most expressly attributed all the incommunicable perfections of God, the essential characters and properties of the divine nature. The very epithet of Holy (absolutely, in way of excellence characteristically put) is one of them: for (as it is in *Hannah's* song) *There is none holy as the Lord; neither is there any beside thee*; there is none beside God absolutely and perfectly Holy (that is, by a most remote distance severed from all things, far exalted above all things, peculiarly venerable and august in majesty) whence *the Holy one*, is a distinctive title of God, Yea the name of Spirit it self (absolutely and eminently put, and so importing highest purity and perfectest actuality) doth seem to imply the same. Also eternity, immensity, omniscience, omnipotency (than which no more high perfections, or more proper to God can be conceived) are attributed to the Holy Spirit. Eternity; for the Apostle to the *Hebrews* calls him *the eternal Spirit*. (How much more, saith he, shall the blood of Christ, who by the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience?) Immensity; *Whither* (saith the Psalmist) *shall I go from thy Spirit? and whither shall I fly from thy face?* The question involveth a negation; and signifieth a manifest reason thereof: I cannot fly any whither from thy Spirit, because it is every where present. Omniscience; *The Spirit*, saith S. Paul, *doth search all things* (that is, it perfectly comprehendeth all things) *even the deep things of God*; *the depths*, or deepest things of God, (and consequently all things, which God knows, or can be known) even those things, which to comprehend doth as far exceed the condition of a creature, as it goeth beyond the capacity of one man to discern the cogitations and affections of another man; for such a comparison S. Paul doth make. Our Saviour in the Gospel saith, *None knoweth who is the Son, but the Father; nor who is the Father but the Son*: but the Holy Spirit did questionless know who was the Father, and who the Son; he had a knowledge therefore most divine and incommunicable. Particularly to the Holy Spirit is assigned the knowledge of future contingencies; which knowledge is peculiarly high and most proper to God, and is therefore called divination; the which peculiarly is appropriated to the Holy Spirit, as its immediate principle; whence he is called the *Spirit of prophecy, the Spirit of revelation, the Spirit of wisdom, the Spirit of truth*; and from him all the Prophets are said to derive their foreknowing power. To these may be adjoined other no less divine attributes of the Holy Spirit; as *Independency* in will and operation; for, *All these things* (saith S. Paul, that is the production of those excellent graces, the distribution of those wonderful gifts) *doth one and the same Spirit work, dividing to every one as he willeth*. And as the *wind bloweth where it willeth*, nor can be determined or hindered by any thing, so (as our Lord insinuates in the Gospel) the Holy Spirit according to his pleasure worketh every where. Absolute goodness, which belongeth only to God (for, *there is none but one, God himself*) but, *Thy Spirit* (saith the Psalmist) *is good, lead me into the land of uprightness*. Most absolute veracity (which also doth imply both perfect knowledge, and extream goodness) the which is signified by the title of truth abstractedly assigned to him: *It is* (saith S. John) *the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth*; that is, most absolutely and perfectly veracious. In fine, omnipotency doth belong to the Holy Spirit, as by his works doth appear, which we shall immediately propound in the next argument. For,

3. Most divine operations (transcending the power of any created thing) are ascribed to the Holy Ghost: such are; to create things, and make the world; for it was the Spirit which resting upon the unshapen mass did hatch the world: *By his spirit* (saith Job) *he hath garnished the heavens*. [And, *By the word of the Lord*, saith the Psalmist, *were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth, or by his Spirit.*] But he (as the Apostle to the *Hebrews* saith) *who made all things, is God*. To conserve things: *Thou sendest forth thy Spirit, they are created, and thou renewest the face of the earth*, saith the Psalmist, speaking about the continued production or conservation of things. Particularly to produce Man both at first and continually: for the soul of the Protoplast was derived from

Εἰ μὴ ἦν ὁ ἕως τοῦ μόνου ἀγαθοῦ τοῦ πνεύματος τοῦ ἁγίου. ἐκ αὐτοῦ ἀγαθόν ἐκλήδη, ὅπου τε κρείττον παρῆλθε τοῦ καλεῖσθαι ἀγαθός, καὶ δὲ ἀνδραπύον. Athan. contra Apoll. T. i. p. 607.

Matt. 19. 17.
Psalm. 143. 10.
Neh. 9. 20.

1 John 5. 6.

Job 26. 13.
Psalm. 33. 6.

Heb. 3. 4.
Psalm. 104. 30.

from the Spirit of God ; and good *Elihu* professeth of himself, *The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life* ; yea (which worketh Job 33. 4. thily may be deemed somewhat greater and more difficult) to create men again or renew them, being marr'd and deformed, unto the image of God (quickning a man's spirit in a manner dead, enlightning his blind mind, reforming his perverse affections) which to effect as it is ascribed to God, so also to the Holy Spirit in places numberless. Also (which is connected with that) to justify a man, to remit sins (not ministerially, but, which is proper to God, principally and absolutely) for, *ye are (saith S. Paul) justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.* To animate the Church by his influence, to govern it by his power and guidance, to prescribe laws unto it, to set rulers over it, to dispense gifts and graces requisite for the building, propagation and preservation thereof, are works of his, and together the most proper and principal works of divine power. To perform miracles, that is works contrary or superiour to the laws of nature, and therefore only congruous to God ; the doing of which is peculiarly attributed to God's Spirit ; particularly to raise the dead, which is the highest of miracles ; *If (saith S. Paul) he that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead, shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.* In fine, there is no work either of nature, or of providence, or of grace, so sublime, or so difficult, which is not ascribed to the efficacy of the Holy Spirit ; the which doth shew his sovereign authority, and his Almighty power ; for surely by no more plain and cogent arguments, than by these, can the omnipotence of the supreme Deity it self be demonstrated.

4. The Divine Majesty of the Holy Spirit may also be asserted from the divine Worship which is duly to be yielded to him. It by God's appointment is yielded to him, when being solemnly baptized in his name we do profess to place our faith and hope upon him, we do protest our reverence and obedience to him. The same is then exhibited, when (according to the rule of S. Paul) together with the grace of our Lord Jesus, and the love of God the Father, we implore the communion of the Holy Spirit. The same is not obscurely signified whenever (that which often occurs) in the execution of divine (most excellent and admirable) offices and works, the Holy Ghost is put in conjunction and co-ordination with the Father and the Son : For that by God most jealous and curious (as it were) of his Honour (who more than once professeth that he will not impart his glory to another) should be allowed to any creature, to march in even rank, to seem advanced to an equal pitch of dignity with himself, is no-wise credible, or agreeable to reason. (*What communion can there be between a Creature and his Creator ? why should that which is made be numbred together with his Maker in the performing of all things ?* saith S. Athanasius well.) Moreover, what dignity belongs to the Holy Spirit, what reverence is due to him, appears clearly from that the blasphemy against him is peculiarly unpardonable, whenas the faults committed against God the Father, and obloquy against the Son are capable of remission ; for the nature of things doth scarce bear, that to detract from a creature should be a crime so capital, or receive such aggravation ; it cannot well be conceived that the honour of a creature should in such a manner be prefer'd to the honour of God himself. *How, saith S. Ambrose, can anyone dare to reckon the Holy Ghost among creatures ? or who doth so render himself obnoxious, that if he derogate from a creature, he may not suppose it to be relaxable to him by some pardon ?*

5. Again, whereas Christ even as a man is elevated in dignity and eminence above all creatures (above every Name, far above all principality, authority and power, as the Apostle teaches us) he is yet in that respect inferiour, and gives place to the Holy Spirit. For as such he did receive his nature from the Holy Spirit ; *That which is conceived in her, is of the Holy Ghost,* saith the Evangelist ; and, *more honour than the house hath he that made it,* saith the Apostle to the Hebrews. Christ was sent by the Holy Spirit ; *The Lord God (said the Prophet of him) and his Spirit hath sent me.* But, *The Apostle (saith he himself) is not greater than he* John 13. 26. *that*

Ποία δὲ κοινωνία τῷ πνεύματι θεοῦ κτιστὴν ; διὰ τὸ πεποιηθῆναι συναριθμεῖται τῷ ποιηταίῳ εἰς τὴν ὅλν πάντων τελείωσιν. Ath. Orat. in Ar.

Ἀσθενὲς ἐν ᾧ λέγειν κτιστὸν, ἢ ποιητὸν τὸ πνεῦμα τοῦ θεοῦ, ὅτι τε πάσα γὰρ παλαιὰ τε καὶ καινὴ μετὰ πατρὸς καὶ υἱοῦ συναριθμεῖται αὐτῷ, καὶ διδοῦται. Id. περὶ ὁμοούσιου. Tom. 1. p. 600.

Quomodo inter creaturas audet quicquam Spiritum S. computare ? aut quia sic se obligat, ut si creaturam derogaverit, non puet sibi hoc aliquā veniā relaxandum ? Ambros.

Phil. 2. 9. Eph. 1. 21. Quomodo creatura dicitur, qui Dominus Creator ex Maria comprobatur ? Aug. Serm. 6. Mat. 1. de Temp.

Heb. 3. 3.

Isa. 48. 16.

John 13. 26.

that sent him; the *Sent* is not greater, that is (by a *λειτουργία*, or *μυστήριον*, the figure of diminution) he is inferior to the *Sender*. Christ was consecrated, and inaugurated into his offices by the Holy Spirit: *The Spirit of the Lord* (foretold *Esaias* of Christ, as the Evangelists interpret) *is upon me, because he hath anointed me*; But, *without controversy the lesser is blessed by the greater*, saith the Apostle. Christ was by the Holy Ghost endowed with excellent gifts abundantly and beyond measure; but, *It is more blessed to give than to receive*, is an Aphorism out of our Lord's own mouth. In fine, our Lord did by virtue of the Holy Spirit perform miracles; by the Eternal Spirit he offered himself to God; by the Spirit he was raised from the dead: which things are manifest arguments that the Holy Spirit doth excel Christ as man; wherefore seeing beside God only, nothing is in worth or dignity superiour to Christ, it necessarily follows that the Holy Spirit is God.

6. I add, that whereas upon divers occasions the ranks and orders of Creatures are mentioned in Scripture (as where all the Quire of them is summon'd and cited to sing the praises of God; namely, the Angels, the heavens, the earth, men, beasts, plants; when Catalogues are recited of things made by Christ, and subject to him, among which Angels, Thrones, Dominations, Dignities and Powers are mentioned) it is strange, that this top of creatures (if a creature he be) this leader of the Quire should wholly be pretermitted. It is very probable, that if the Prophets had known, or the Apostles had thought this, they would have not been silent about it, they would, as reason had required, have set him in the head of all; which if they had done, they would have exempted us from these scruples and errors in so high a point: but they could not do it, because indeed the Holy Spirit is not in the order of creatures; the which we do seem sufficiently to have proved.

To all the premised points no small accession of weight doth come from the authority of so many Holy Fathers and Councils; and from the consent of the Church, running down through so many ages; to oppose which, without very weighty and manifest reasons, doth as much recede from prudence, as it is far from modesty.

III. The next point we shall consider is the Original of the Holy Spirit; the which we do assert to be in way of procession jointly from God the Father, and God the Son; meaning hereby, that to this divine person in a peculiar manner (incomprehensible indeed and ineffable, but which in some manner by this term procession may be signified) the divine Essence which he hath, is communicated from the Father and the Son.

That the Holy Spirit is not from himself, as the Father is, is plain; for that being supposed, there would be more first principles than one, and consequently more Gods than one; which is contrary to the whole tenour of Scripture: neither did any ever affirm so much.

That he proceedeth from the Father, appeareth from that the Father is the fountain and first principle of all Essence: and by our Saviour the Spirit is said *ἐκ τοῦ Πατρὸς ἐρχόμενος*, to go out from the Father; and he is called *τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἐκ τοῦ Θεοῦ*, The Spirit that is out of God (the Father) by S. Paul: and this is generally confessed.

That also he doth proceed from the Son (which is by the modern Greeks denied) may be proved.

1. Because as he is called the Spirit of the Father, so he is also often stiled the Spirit of the Son; which signifies he is in a like manner related to the Son as to the Father; and that both therefore in a like manner conspire to his production.

2. He is said to be sent as from the Father, so also from the Son. But mission and procession do not seem to differ, except in manner of speech (one more especially denoting the name whence, the other the act or effect of the same thing) Nor doth it agree to the Holy Spirit, who (as we have shewed) is God, to go out, or be sent otherwise than by reception of essence.

3. The Son saith of the Holy Spirit, *ἐκ ἐμοῦ ἀποστείλω, he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you*; and to the same purpose, *whatsoever he shall hear, he shall speak*; by which saying it is intimated that the Holy Spirit doth receive knowledge from the Son; the which, being God, he cannot otherwise do, than by receiving his essence from the Son.

4. The Holy Spirit is a person third in order; seeing then the Son before him in order (in order I say, not in time) obtaineth the divine nature; so that, when the

to remove which bad dispositions (inconsistent with God's friendship and favour, driving us into sin and misery) and to beget those contrary to them, the knowledge and belief of divine truth, a love of goodness and delight therein, a well composed, orderly and steady frame of spirit, God in mercy doth grant to us the Virtue of his Holy Spirit; who first *opening our Hearts*, so as to let in and apprehend the light of divine truth, then by representation of proper Arguments persuading our reason to embrace it, begetteth divine knowledge, wisdom and faith in our minds, which is the work of illumination and instruction, the first part of his office respecting our salvation.

Acts 16. 14.
1 Cor. 12. 8, 9.

Then by continual impressions he bendeth our inclinations, and mollifieth our hearts, and tempereth our affections to a willing compliance with God's will, and a hearty complacence in that which is good and pleasing to God; so breeding all pious and vertuous inclinations in us, reverence toward God, charity to men, sobriety and purity as to our selves, with the rest of those amiable and heavenly virtues of soul, which is the work of sanctification, another great part of his Office.

Tit. 3. 5.
Col. 2. 12, 13.
Eph. 2. 5.
4. 23, 24.
2. 10.
2 Cor. 5. 17.

Both these operations together (enlightning our minds, sanctifying our will and affections) do constitute, and accomplish that work, which is styled the Regeneration, Renovation, Vivification, New-creation, Resurrection of a man; the faculties of our souls being so improved, that we become, as it were, other men thereby; able and apt to do that for which before we were altogether indisposed, and unfit.

Gal. 5. 25.
Rom. 8. 14.

He also directeth, and governeth our actions, continually leading, and moving us in the ways of obedience to God's holy will and law. As we live by him (having a new spiritual life implanted in us) so we *walk by him*, are continually led and acted by his conduct, and help. He reclaimeth us from error and sin; he supporteth and strengtheneth us in temptation; he adviseth, and admonisheth, exciteth and encourageth us to all works of piety and virtue.

Rom. 8. 26, 27.
1 John 5. 14.

Particularly, he guideth and quickneth us in devotion, shewing us what we should ask, raising in us holy desires, and comfortable hopes, disposing us to approach unto God with fit dispositions of mind, love and reverence, and humble confidence.

Rom. 15. 13.
Heb. 3. 6.
1 Pet. 1. 8.

It is also a notable part of the Holy Spirit's office to comfort and sustain us, as in all our religious practice, so particularly in our doubts, difficulties, distresses and afflictions; to beget joy, peace and satisfaction in us, in all our performances, and all our sufferings, whence the title of Comforter belongeth to him.

Rom. 8. 23.
2 Cor. 1. 22.
5. 5.
Eph. 1. 14.

It is also another part thereof, to assure us of God's gracious love and favour, and that we are his children; confirming in us the hopes of our everlasting inheritance. We feeling our selves to live spiritually by him, to love God, and goodness, to thirst after righteousness, and to delight in pleasing God, are thereby raised to hope God loves and favours us; and that he having by so authentick a seal ratified his word and promise, having already bestowed so sure a pledge, so precious an earnest, so plentiful first-fruits, will not fail to make good the remainder designed and promised us, of everlasting joy and bliss.

2 Cor. 12. 12, 13.

4. The Holy Ghost is also our intercessor with God; presenting our supplications, and procuring our good. He cryeth in us, he pleadeth for us to God. Whence he is peculiarly called *ἱκετης*, the Advocate; that is, one who is called in by his good word, or countenance to aid him, whose cause is to be examined, or petition to be considered.

Acts 20. 28.
Eph. 4. 12.

1 Cor. 12. 11.

5. To which things we may add, that the Holy Ghost bears the office of a soul to God's Church, informing, enlivening and actuating the whole body thereof; connecting and containing its members in spiritual union, harmony, order, peace and safety; especially quickning the principal members (the Governours and Pastors) thereof; constituting them in their function, qualifying them for the discharge thereof, guiding and aiding them in it: *Take heed* (saith S. Paul to the Elders of Ephesus) *unto your selves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers: And, all these things worketh that one, and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he willeth.*

We have thus passed over the several main doctrines concerning the Blessed Holy Spirit; the application of which to practice briefly should be this; the uses which the consideration of these points may have, are these.

We

1. We are upon the premises obliged to render all honour, and adoration, to the Majesty of the divine Spirit.

2. The consideration of these things should work in us an humble affection, and a devout thankfulness to God for so inestimable a favour conferr'd upon us, as is the presence and inhabitation, the counsel, conduct and assistance of God's Holy Spirit in us. Him we gratefully must own and acknowledge as the Author of our spiritual life, of all good dispositions in us, of all good works performed by us, of all happiness that we are capable of; to him therefore we must humbly render all thanks and praise, assuming nothing to our selves.

3. We should earnestly desire, and pray for God's Spirit, the fountain of such excellent benefits, such graces, such gifts, such privileges, such joys and blessings inestimable. If we heartily invite him, if we fervently pray for him, he assuredly will come to us; for so our Lord hath promised, *That our heavenly Father will give the Holy Spirit to them which ask it.* Luke 11. 13.

4. We should endeavour to demean our selves well toward the Holy Spirit; yielding to that heavenly guest, when he vouchsafeth to arrive, a ready entrance, and a kind welcome into our hearts; entertaining him with all possible respect and observance; hearkening attentively to his holy suggestions, and carefully obeying him; not quenching the divine light, or the devout heat which he kindleth in us; not resisting his kindly motions and suasions; not grieving, or vexing him, that so with satisfaction he may continue, and reside in us, to our infinite benefit and comfort. It should engage us to cleanse our selves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit; that we may be fit temples for so holy and pure a Spirit to dwell in; lest he, by our impurities, be offended, loath and forsake us.

5. It is matter of comfort, and encouragement, (exceedingly needful and useful for us) to consider that we have such a guide and assistant in all our religious practice and spiritual warfare. If our lusts be strong, our temptations great, our enemies mighty; we need not be disheartned, having this All-wise, and All-mighty friend to advise, and help us: his grace is sufficient for us against all the strength of hell, the flesh, and the world. Let our duty be never so hard, and our natural force never so weak; we shall be able to do all things by him, that strengtheneth us: if we will but faithfully apply our selves to his aid, we cannot fail of good success.

THUS far the Author's Sermons upon the Creed. As to the remaining Articles, he hath only left a short Explication of them, like to that upon the Lord's Prayer, &c. And there needed not much more, considering that the Substance of these Articles had been treated of before: That of the Holy Catholick Church, and of the Communion of Saints in his Discourse of the Unity of the Church, at the end of his Treatise of the Pope's Supremacy; and that of the Forgiveness of Sins, in his Sermons of Justification; and that of the Resurrection of the Body, in his Sermon of the Resurrection of Christ.

The Holy Catholick Church.

THIS Article was, I conceive, adjoined, or inserted here, upon occasion of those many Heresies and Schisms, which from the beginning continually sprang up, to the danger of Christian doctrine, and disturbance of the Church; the introducers thereof meaning thereby to secure the truth of Religion, the authority of Ecclesiastical Discipline, the peace and unity of the Church, by engaging men to disclaim any consent or conspiracy with any

of those erroneous, or contentious people (who had devised new conceits, destructive or dangerous to the Faith, against the general consent of Christians, or drave on troublesome factions, contrary to the common order, and prejudicial to the peace of the Church.) Their meaning of this Article therefore was, I take it, this : I believe. that is, I do adhere unto (for belief, as we at first observed, is to be taken as the nature of the matter requireth) or I am perswaded that I ought to adhere unto that Body of Christians, which diffused over the world retains the Faith which was taught, and the Discipline which was settled, and the Peace which was enjoined by our Lord, and his Disciples ; I acknowledge the Doctrines generally embraced by the Churches, founded and instructed by the Apostles ; I am ready to observe the received customs, and practices by them derived from Apostolical Institution ; I submit to the laws and disciplines by lawful authority established in them ; I do persist in charity, concord and communion with them.

And that men antiently should be obliged to profess thus, there is ground both in Reason, and Scripture. In reason, there being no more proper or effectual argument to assure us, that any doctrine is true, or practice warrantable ; no means more proper to convince Sectaries (deviating from truth or duty) than the consent of all Churches, of whom (being so distant in place, language, customs, humour ; so independent, or coordinate in power) it is not imaginable, that they should soon, or easily conspire in forsaking the doctrines inculcated by the Apostles, or the practices instituted by them ; it is the argument which *Irenæus*, *Tertullian*, and other defenders of Christian truth and peace do press, and it may in matters of this kind pass for a demonstration.

It hath also ground in Scripture ; which as it foretells, that pernicious heresies should be introduced, that *many false Prophets should arise, and seduce many ; that grievous wolves should come in, not sparing the flock ; that men should arise speaking perverse things, to draw disciples after them ;* as they warn us to take heed of such men, to reject and refuse hereticks, to mark those which make divisions and scandals, beside the doctrine which Christians had learnt, and to decline from them ;

1 Tim. 6. 3. to stand off from such men, as do *ἐρεσδιδομεναι*, that is, teach things different from
2 Tim. 1. 13. Apostolical Doctrine, the Doctrine according to Godliness ; as it enjoins us to hold
14. 3. 14. fast the form of sound words, heard from the Apostles ; to continue in the things, which we have learned, and been assured of, knowing of whom we learnt them ; to obey
Rom. 6. 17. from the heart, that form of doctrine, into which we were delivered ; to keep the tra-
1 Cor. 11. 2. ditions, as the Apostles delivered them to us ; to stand fast, and hold the tradi-
2 Thess. 2. 15. ons which we were taught, whether by word or writing ; to strive earnestly for the faith
3. 6. once delivered to the Saints ; as it enjoins us to walk orderly, to obey our guides, or rulers ; to pursue peace, to maintain concord, to abide in charity with all good Christians ; as it declareth heresies, factions, contentions and separations to be the works of the flesh, proceeding from corrupt dispositions of soul, (pride, covetousness, vanity, rashness, instability, perverseness, craft, hypocrisy, want of conscience) so it also describes the universality of them, who stick to the truth and observe the Law of Christ, keeping the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace ; to be one body, knit together, and compacted of parts, affording mutual aid and supply to its nourishment and welfare ; joined to, and deriving life, motion, sense from one Head ; informed by one spirit : as one house built upon the foundation of Prophets and Apostles, Christ himself being the corner-stone, in whom all the building is fitly framed and connected ; as one family under one Master ; one City under one Governour ; one flock under one shepherd ; one nation or people subject to the same Law and Government, used to the same speech, custom and conversation ; lastly, as one Church or Congregation : for as sometimes every particular Assembly of Christians, and sometimes a larger collection of particular Societies, combined together in one order, and under one Government, are termed Churches ; so the whole aggregation of all particular Churches, or of all Christian people, is frequently called the Church ; even as the whole body of those who lived in the profession of obedience to the Jewish Law (which was a type of the Christian Church) is called *קהל העליונה*, the Congregation.

Ubi tres sunt etiam Laici, ibi Ecclesia est.
Tertul. Exb. Cast.

In relation to which Society, these are the duties which we here profess ourselves obliged to, and in effect promise to observe :

1. That we do, and will persist in the truth of Christian doctrine, deliver'd by our Saviour and his Apostles, attested unto by the general consent of all Christians; avoiding all novelties of opinion deviating from Apostolical Doctrine.
2. That we are obliged to maintain a hearty charity and good affection to all good Christians.
3. That we are bound to communicate with all good Christians, and all Societies sincerely professing faith, charity and obedience to our Lord; so as to join with them, as occasion shall be, in all offices of piety; to maintain good correspondence and concord with them.
4. That we should submit to the discipline and order, should preserve the peace, and endeavour the welfare of that part thereof wherein we live; for what of good or harm is done to a member thereof, is also done to the whole.
5. That we should disavow and shun all factious combinations whatever, of persons corrupting the truth of Christian doctrine, or disturbing the peace of the Church, or of any part thereof.
6. In fine, that we sincerely should wish in our hearts, earnestly pray for, and by our best endeavours promote the peace and prosperity of the whole Catholick Church; whereof we profess our selves members and children; following (as St. Paul directs) *righteousness, faith, charity, peace with those that call upon our Lord,* 2 Tim. 2. 22. *with a pure heart.*

The Communion of Saints.

THESE words were not extant in any of the antient *Creeds*, but were afterward inserted; nor as I conceive doth the meaning of them much differ from what was intended in the precedent *Article*; and perhaps it was adjoyned for interpretation thereof; for the meaning of them is, as I take it, that all the Saints (that is all Christians. either in legal presumption, or according to real disposition of heart such) do, in effect, or should, according to obligation, communicate, partake, join together, consent, and agree in what concerneth Saints, or members of the Holy Catholick Church; in believing and acknowledging the same heavenly truth, in performance of devotions, or offices of piety with and for one another, in charitable good will and affection toward one another, in affording mutual advices, assistances and supplies toward the good (either spiritual or temporal) of each other; in condolency and compassion of each others evils, in congratulation and complacency in each others good; in minding the same thing for one another; and bearing one anothers burdens; so that if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; or if one member be honoured, all the members rejoyce with it. This briefly seems to be the meaning of this point; and I need not to insist on clearing the truth, or shewing the uses thereof; the doctrine so manifestly carrying its obligation and its use in the face thereof.

The Forgiveness of Sins.

THAT men are naturally apt to transgress the laws of God and the dictates of Reason; that so doing they incur guilt, and are exposed to vengeance (from the great Patron of right and goodness, who is injured and dishonoured thereby) that hence they are subject to restless fears, and stinging remorses of conscience; that they cannot be exempted from such obnoxiousness, otherwise than by the free grace and mercy of God, nor be freed from such anxieties otherwise than by an assurance of pardon from him, are points, to natural light, sufficiently manifest.

Of such a disposition or will in God to remit offences, that all men have ever had a presumption, their application to him in religious practice doth shew (for

Heb. 11. 6. no man would address himself in service to God without a hope, that God is reconcilable to him, and that his service therefore may be acceptable) particularly that general practice of offering sacrifice for expiation of sin, and appeasing God's wrath, doth plainly declare the same.

But this was indeed but a presumption, or conjecture, partly drawn from the necessity of their case (which admitted no other remedy beside that hope) and from man's nature, apt to presume that which most pleaseth; partly grounded upon experience of God's forbearance to punish, and the continuance of his bounty toward men; upon which grounds no man could build a full confidence that he should find mercy; much less could he be satisfied, upon what terms it would be granted, in what manner it should be dispensed, or how far it should extend; these things merely depending on the will of God, and the knowledge of them only upon revelation from him.

The Jewish dispensation (which was particular and preparatory to Christianity) did indeed appoint and accept expiations for some lesser faults, committed out of ignorance and infirmity; but it pretended not to justify from all things; nor upon any terms did it promise remission of great sins wilfully committed, but threatened remediless excision for them; pronouncing dreadful imprecations not only upon the transgressors of some particular laws, but against all those who continued not in all things written in the law to do them; so that the remission tendered by Moses was of a narrow extent, and could hardly exempt any man from obligation to punishment, and from fear thereof; although indeed (to prevent despair, and that which naturally follows thereon, a total neglect of duty) God was pleased by his Prophets, among that people, occasionally to signify somewhat of farther grace (beyond what he was tied to by the terms of the Covenant with that people) reserved for them, and that he was willing (upon condition of hearty repentance, and real amendment) to receive to mercy even those, who had been guilty of the most heinous offences: but these discoveries, as they were special, and extraordinary, so were they preparatory to the Gospel, and dispensed upon grounds only declared therein.

It is the Gospel only, which explicitly teacheth and tendereth remission of all sins, shewing for what reasons, upon what conditions, to what purposes it is dispensed by God. It clearly, and fully declares, how God in free mercy and pity toward us (being all involved in sin and guilt, and lying under a condemnation to death and misery; all our works being unworthy of acceptance, all our sacrifices being unable in the least part to satisfy for our offences) was pleased himself to provide an obedience worthy of his acceptance, and thoroughly pleasing to him (in effect imputable to us, as performed by one of our kind, and race, and for our sake willingly undertaken, according to his gracious pleasure) to provide a sacrifice in nature so pure, in value so precious, as might be perfectly satisfactory for our offences; in regard to which obedience, God is become reconciled, so as to open his arms of grace to mankind; in respect to which sacrifice he doth offer remission of sins to all men, who shall upon the terms propounded be willing to embrace it; namely, upon condition of faith, and repentance; that is, upon sincerely professing the doctrine of Christ, and heartily resolving to obey his laws. This is that great doctrine so peculiar to the Gospel, from whence especially it hath its name, and is stiled the word of grace; this is that great blessing,

Luke 1. 77,
78.
Luke 2. 10.

which Zachariah in his Prophetical Hymn did praise God for, *The giving knowledge of salvation to God's people in the remission of their sins according to the tender mercies of our God, in which the day-spring from on high hath visited us*; this is the good tidings of great joy to all people, which the Angels did celebrate at our Saviour's birth; this is that main point which our Lord especially charged his

Luke 24. 47.

Apostles to declare and testify, *that in his name repentance and remission of sins should be preached to all nations*; that God had exalted him to his right hand, as a

Acts 5. 31.

Prince and a Saviour to give repentance unto Israel and remission of sins, (to give repentance, that is, to give, as Clemens in his Epistle well expoundeth it, *μετανοίας τόπον*, a place for repentance in order to mercy; or that it should be acceptable, and available for the remission of our sins, as all that on our part is required toward it) all which points (together with the nature of this remission, its causes, its grounds, its ends, its conditions, its means and way of conveyance) are admirably couched in those words of S. Paul: *All men (saith he) have sinned, and are*

Rom. 3. 4,
Ecce.

come

come short of the Glory of God; but we are justified freely by his grace, by the redemption which is in Christ Jesus; whom God hath proposed a propitiatory by faith in his blood, for the demonstration of his righteousness, toward the forgiveness of former offences.

The consideration of which point is of exceedingly great use and influence.

1. It should engage us to admire the great goodness of God, and with grateful hearts to praise him for so great a favour: that God being so grievously affronted and wronged by our sins (loaded with extream aggravations) should be at such charge to purchase for us the means of pardon, should offer it so freely, should so earnestly invite and intreat us to accept it; How inexpressible a clemency doth it demonstrate? How great thankfulness doth it require from us?

2. It should beget in us an ardent love to God, answerable to that love which disposed him to bestow on us so inestimable a benefit. We should imitate the debtor in the Gospel, *who most loved him, who had forgiven him most*; and the good Penitent S. Magdalene; who, *because much was forgiven her, did love much*. Luke 7. 47.

3. It is matter and ground of hope and of comfort to us, (is preventive of despair, and immoderate sadness) for that our case cannot be so bad, but there is an assured remedy at hand, if we please to have recourse thereto; the mercy of God upon our true repentance; whereby we infallibly shall obtain that happy state, of which it is said, *Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven — blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth no iniquity*. Psal. 32. 1, 2.

4. It is a great engagement to obedience; for that it greatly aggravates our disobedience, and endangers our estate. Having once from God's mercy obtained a cure and state of health, we by relapsing into sin do incur deeper guilt, and expose our selves to greater hazard; *Behold* (saith our Lord in like case) *thou art made whole, sin no more, lest a worse thing come upon thee*. John 5. 14.

5. Lastly, it shews us how much (in conformity to God, and compliance with his will) we should bear with, and forgive the offences, or injuries done to us. You know how strongly our Lord in the Gospel presseth the consideration of God's free pardon bestowed on us to this purpose; how he sets out the extream unreasonableness and dissingenuity of those, who (notwithstanding this dealing of God with them) are hard hearted, and unmerciful toward their fellow-servants; how he threatens implacable severity toward them, who *do not from their hearts forgive* to their brethren their trespasses; and promiseth remission of sins to them, who (according to what they profess to do in their prayers) shall forgive to men the offences committed against them; making it not only an indispensable condition, but a sufficient means of obtaining the divine favour and mercy. Matt. 18. 35. &c. Matt. 6. 14.

I shall only farther take notice, that although it be true, that God in the Gospel doth generally propound remission of sins (upon account of our Lord's performances, and in his name) to all that truly repent, and turn unto him; chiefly granting it on this consideration, and not withholding it from any, upon a blameless default of other performances; yet he requires (and complying with his will therein, is part of the duty, which repentance disposes to, and is declared by) that (as well for publick edification, and the honour of his Church, as for the comfort and advantage of persons concerned therein) this repentance should be solemnly declared and approved by the Church; that this remission should be formally dispensed by the hands of God's Ministers, being declared by express words, or ratified by certain seals, or signified by mysterious representations appointed by God. And to remission of sins, as thus dispensed, I doubt not but this Article hath an especial reference; it being in S. Cyprian's form of profession at Baptism expressed by, *Credo remissionem peccatorum in Ecclesia*: but because the Church's remitting of sins thus, is by virtue of that authority, which Christ imparted to his Church, called the *Power of the Keys*; I shall upon this occasion here briefly explain the nature of that Power.

The Power of the Keys.

Matt. 16. 19.

THIS Power in part is founded upon (and this name of it was wholly drawn from) those words of our Lord to S. Peter; *And I will give thee the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven.* Where that which our Lord doth promise to S. Peter (not to him personally, but, as the *Fathers* interpret it, representatively; he then signifying the Church, and standing in the place of its Governours, however not exclusively; for it) is by a parity of reason to be extended to all the Apostles, and after them to all the Governours of the Church; unto whom the same power is other-where in terms equivalent committed, and by whom it was exercised; as may appear from comparing the practice of the Apostles, and of the Church in continual succession from them, with the nature or intent of this power; the which it is now our business very briefly to explain.

It is expressed in a metaphorical term: and it is therefore to be understood according to the analogy it beareth with the thing assumed to resemble it; as the nature of the object thereof doth require, or admit. Wherefore it being the main property of a Key, by opening, to give ingress, and egress; (admittance into a place, or emission from it) or by shutting to exclude from entrance, or to detain within: this power may be supposed to imply a right, or ability to perform such actions in reference to its object, which is the Kingdom of heaven.

By the *kingdom of heaven* is understood the state of religion under the Gospel; in distinction (as it seems) from the constitution and condition thereof under the *Mosaical Law*. In the times of the Law, God's Law was in a manner terrestrial; he being King of the *Jewish Nation* particularly; *Jerusalem* being his Royal seat; and the Temple his throne; where he was served with external and visible performances; where he expressly promised earthly benefits and privileges (long life and prosperity in the land of *Canaan*) and threatened punishments answerable. But in the Gospel God is worshipped universally, as resident in heaven, as requiring spiritual services, addressed to heaven; as conferring rewards and inflicting penalties relating to the future state there. This state therefore aptly is called the *kingdom of heaven*, of which all Christians are subjects; the Body of whom consequently may also be named the kingdom of heaven; for the word kingdom sometime denoteth the constitution of things in, or under which a certain people do live, sometimes the people themselves.

Now whereas this state hath two degrees, or the persons under it two conditions, one here present upon earth in transition, and acquisition; the other hereafter of residence, and fruition in heaven (one like that of the *Israelites* travelling in the wilderness, the other like their possession of *Canaan*) in this case we may well understand both; but chiefly the first (the Kingdom of Grace here) wherein immediately this power is exerted; although its effects do finally refer and reach to the other (the Kingdom of Glory hereafter.)

Let us then consider how this Kingdom may be opened, or shut by the Governours of the Church: this evidently may be performed several ways.

1. The Kingdom of heaven may be opened by yielding real helps, inducing to enter into the Church; it may be shut, by the same means inducing persons to continue within it. So by instruction, advice, persuasion, admonition, reproof; by affording fit means, and occasions; by prescribing laws and rules conducing to those purposes, the Governours are obliged to open and shut the Kingdom of heaven; and the doing so therefore may be conceived an ingredient of this power:

2. The Kingdom of heaven may be opened by intercession, or imprecation from God of fit dispositions qualifying persons to enter, together with a mind willing to do so. Thus, as all Christians in their way may open the Kingdom, so particularly the Governours by their office and function are obliged to do it,

1 Tim. 2. 1. as the publick mouths of the Church. Wherefore S. Paul enjoins, that *Supplication be made for all men; because God would have all men to be saved, and to have them*

them come to the knowledge of the truth; or would have all men brought into this Kingdom.

3. The Kingdom of heaven may be opened or shut by prudent discrimination of persons, who are fit to be received into the Church (*εὐσεβος εἰς βασιλείαν*, well disposed for the kingdom, as S. Luke speaks) or who deserve to be rejected from it.

Thus the Governours of the Church do open and shut the Kingdom, when they determine who shall be admitted to Baptism (which is *Ecclesie janua*, and *porta gratiae*, as S. Austin calls it) and who shall be refused; they admitted, who appear competently instructed in Christian Doctrine, and well resolved to obey it; they refused, who seem in those points ignorant, or ill resolved.

4. The Kingdom of heaven may be opened or shut by judicial acts; whereby unworthy persons (whose conversation may be infectious, or whose continuance in the Church may be infamous thereto) are excluded from it, or kept without; or whereby persons upon sufficient presumption of repentance and amendment, are restored to communion.

Thus, considering the sense of the words with the nature of the matter, the Power of the Keys may be understood.

The same may be farther cleared by considering and explicating the Phrases equivalent, by which it is expressed, or interpreted: Such are especially, *Binding*, and *Loosing*; *Remitting*, and *Retaining sins*.

By *Binding* and *Loosing*, our Lord himself interpreteth this power: *I will* (saith he) *give unto thee the Keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven.* For understanding the sense of which phrases, we may consider, that things or persons may be several ways bound and loosed.

1. *Binding* may denote any sort of determination, restriction or detention imposed on persons and things; and *Loosing* answerably may signify the contrary effects. So by just authority to command, or prohibit a thing (whereby its moral quality is determined, it is made good or bad) is to bind that thing, and the persons subject to that authority. Also to abrogate a law, or to dispense with its observance, is to loose the matter of that law, together with the persons concerned in it. Thus it is said, that the Scribes, by prescribing many unprofitable observances, did bind heavy burdens on the People. Again likewise,

Matt. 23. 4.

2. To interpret the sense of a law or doctrine, is a kind of ligation, or solution: it binds by declaring what is commanded, or prohibited, and consequently to what men are obliged: It looses, by shewing what is permitted, or remains indifferent, so leaving men to their freedom. *Quam verò clavem habebant Legis doctores, nisi interpretationem legis?* saith Tertullian. To bind and loose thus, doth plainly belong to the Pastors of the Church, they by office being the interpreters and teachers of God's law.

In Mark. lib. cap. 27.

3. The exercise of any jurisdiction doth *astringe* the offender to punishment, or satisfaction; or doth absolve him from them: it consequently may be called *Ligation*, or *Solution* respectively.

4. The bringing Persons under any contract is a tying them to performance thereof. Thus do the Pastors of the Church bind those, whom they receive into the Church at Baptism, upon undertaking the conditions of Christianity; and those, whom after exclusion from Christian Communion they absolve, upon engagement to lead a better life.

5. The detention of a person in any state, or under any power, is called *Ligation*: and a deliverance out of such a state, or power, *Solution*. So he that (by withholding means, or assurance of pardon) is detained under the guilt of sin, is thereby bound; but he that hath the means and overtures of pardon conferr'd on him, is loosed: and thus do the Pastors of the Church bind and loose; by retaining and remitting sin; the doing which is an instance of this power, expressly granted by our Lord: *Whosoever sins* (saith he) *ye remit, they are remitted to them; whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained.* John 20.

Now they may be understood to remit, or retain sins divers ways.

1. They do remit sins *dispositive*; by working in persons fit dispositions, upon which remission of sins, by God's promise, is consequent; the dispositions of faith and repentance.

• 2. They remit (or retain) sins *declarative*; as the Ambassadors of God, in his name pronouncing the word of reconciliation to the penitent, and denouncing wrath to the obstinate in sin.

James 5. 14, 15. 3. They remit sins *impetrative*; obtaining pardon for sinners by their prayers; according to that of S. James; *Is any man sick among you, let him call the Elders of the Church, and let them pray over him — And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.*

4. They remit sins *dispensative*, by consigning pardon in administration of the Sacraments; especially in conferring Baptism, whereby, duly administered and undertaken, all sins are washed away; and in the absolving of Penitents, wherein grace is exhibited and ratified by imposition of hands; the which S. Paul calls *χειρὶσιν*, to bestow grace, or favour upon the Penitent.

By considering all these things, we may competently understand wherein this Power of the Keys doth consist. We might farther illustrate it, by observing the exercise thereof by the Apostles, and in the Primitive Church; by viewing the practice of a like power under the Law (which might perhaps be the rise and pattern hereof) by considering the necessity and usefulness of such a power: but I cannot insist on those particulars, but proceed to the next *Article*.

The Resurrection of the Body, or Flesh.

2 Tim. 1. 10. **T**HE doctrine of the immortality of the Soul (whereby men are capable of rewards or punishments, according to their doings in this life) hath, in all Religions, been deemed a necessary Principle, and for such (as Cicero and Seneca expressly tell us) hath been embraced by all Nations; having indeed probably from original Tradition been conveyed over all the World. The same also divers *Philosophers* (*Socrates* especially, and his Followers) did by natural reason strive to evince true. But Tradition being too slippery, and Reason too feeble throughly to perswade it; Christianity by a clear and full proof (of miraculous works, and sensible experiments) doth assure us of it; The certainty thereof we owe to his instruction, who brought life and immortality to light by the Gospel. It plainly shews, that when we dye, we do not (like brut beasts, or other natural bodies, when they appear dissolved) wholly perish; that our souls do not vanish into nothing, nor are resolved into invisible principles, but do return into God's hand, or into the place by him appointed for them, there continuing in that life which is proper to a soul. Neither only thus much doth it teach us concerning our state after this life, but it farther informs us, that our bodies themselves shall be raised again out of their dust and corruption, that our souls shall be reunited to them, and that our persons shall be restored into their perfect integrity of nature; the bringing of which effects to pass, by divine power, is commonly called, *the resurrection of the dead*, or, *from the dead* (*ἐκ νεκρῶν*) and simply the Resurrection; as also being raised, being reduced from the dead — Sometimes also it is called, the *Regeneration* (or iterated nativity) and *being born from the dead*; which terms imply a respect to the body, and to the person of a man, as constituted of body and Soul; for the mere permanency of our souls in being and life could not (with any propriety or truth) be called a resurrection; that, which never had fallen could not be said to be raised again; that which did never die, could not be restored from death; nor could men be said to rise again but in respect to that part which had fallen, or that state which had ceased to be. And as to be born at first doth signify the production and union of the parts, essential to a man; so to be born again implies the restitution and reunion of the same; a man thereby becoming entirely the same person that he was before. The same is also signified in terms more formal and directly expressive; the *quickning of the dead*; the *vivification of our mortal bodies*; the *redemption of our bodies*; the corrup-

corruptible (*τὸ φθαρτὸν σῶμα*, this very same corruptible body) putting on incorruption, and this mortal putting on immortality; those who are in the graves hearing Christ's voice, and proceeding forth to resurrection, either of life, or judgment; the awaking of them which sleep in the dust of the earth; the sea, the death, the hell (or universal grave) resigning their dead; which expressions, and the like occurring, do clearly and fully prove the reparation of our bodies, and their reunion to our souls, and our persons becoming in substance completely the same that we were. Which truth of all perhaps that Christianity revealed, as most new and strange, was the hardest received, and found most opposition among Heathens, especially Philosophers: *Hearing the resurrection of the dead, some of them mocked, others* Acts 17. 32. *said, we will hear thee again of this matter.* So was S. Paul's discourse about this point entertained at Athens; they neglected or derided it, as a thing altogether impossible, or very improbable to happen (as Pliny somewhere counts the revocation of the dead to life impossible to be performed, elsewhere calls it, *puerile deliramentum*, a childish dotage to suppose it.) But why it should be deemed either impossible to divine power, or improbable upon accounts of reason, no good argument can be assigned. To recollect the dispersed parts of a man's body, to range and dispose them into their due situation and order; to reduce them into a temper fit to discharge vital functions; to rejoin the soul to a body so restored; why should it be impossible, or seem difficult to him, who did first frame, and temper our body out of the dust, and inspired the soul into it; to him, who out of mere confusion digested the whole world into so wonderful an order and harmony; to him, who into a deep lump of earth inserted such numberless varieties of life; who from seeds buried in the ground and corrupted there, doth cause so goodly plants to spring forth; who hath made all nature to subsist by continual vicissitudes of life and death; every morning, in a manner, and every spring, representing a general Resurrection? (Well might the Prophet Jeremy say, *Alas Lord* Jer. 32. 17. *God, thou hast made the heaven and the earth, by thy great power, and stretched out arm; and there is nothing too hard for thee:* there is indeed nothing too hard for omniscient Wisdom to contrive, for omnipotent Strength to execute.) And what difficulties soever fancy may suggest; Can we doubt of that being possible, which experience attesteth done? Ezekiel saw *dry bones* rejointed, and reinspired with life; Ezek. divers instances of dead Persons restored to life are recorded in the Prophetical Writings, and more in the New Testament; but most remarkable is that passage at our Saviour's death, when it is said, that *many tombs were opened, and many* Matt. 27. 52. *bodies of Saints that had departed rose, and coming out of the tombs, after our Saviour's Resurrection, entered into the Holy City, and did appear to many* (or publicly to the many, *πῶς πολλοῖς*) which was a most full and manifest experiment of a miraculous Resurrection, like to that which we believe: but of all, our Lord's own Resurrection doth irrefragably confirm the possibility of our Resurrection; so that S. Paul, with highest reason, might thus expostulate with the incredulous upon this account: *And if Christ be preached* (or assured by testimony) *that he rose* 1 Cor. 15. 12. *from the dead, how say some, that there is no resurrection of the dead? that is, how can any man deny that to be possible, which is so palpably exemplified?*

Neither can the point be shewed improbable, or implausible; but it is rather very consonant to the reason of the thing; and good causes may be assigned why it should be. Man, according to original design and frame, doth consist of soul and body; these parts have a natural relation, an aptitude, and an appetite (as it seems) to cohabit, and cooperate with each other; many actions very proper to man's nature cannot be performed without their conjunction and concurrence; many capacities of joy and comfort (with their opposites) do result thence: the separation of them we see how unwilling, violent and repugnant it is to nature; and we are taught that it is penal, and consequent upon sin, and therefore cannot be good and perfect. Wherefore it is no wonder that God designing to restore man to his antient integrity, yea to a higher perfection; rewarding him with all the felicity his nature is capable of (on the one hand I mean, as on the other hand justly to punish and afflict him according to his demerit) should raise the body, and rejoin it to the soul, that it might contribute its natural subserviency to such enjoyments, and sufferings respectively. Not to omit the congruity in justice, that the bodies themselves, which did communicate in works of obedience and holiness, or of disloyalty and profaneness (which in S. Paul's language, were either servants of

of righteousness unto sanctity, or slaves to impurity and iniquity) should also partake in suitable recompences; that the body which endured grievous hardships for righteousness, should enjoy comfortable refreshments; or that those, which did wallow in unlawful pleasures, should undergo just afflictions.

Many other things might be said to this purpose, but I pass to the next point annexed to this, as in nature, so in order here.

The Life Everlasting.

Acts 24. 15.

Heb. 6. 2.

2 Cor. 5. 10.

John 5. 29.

Matt. 25. 46.

Dan. 12. 2.

Phil. 3. 11.

Luke 20. 35.

THE immediate consequent of the Resurrection (common, as S. Paul expresseth, to just, and unjust) is, as we have it placed in the Catalogue of Fundamentals, set down by the Apostle to the *Hebrews*, *ἀνδρῶν*, that judgment or doom, by which the eternal state of every person is determined; and accordingly every man must (as S. Paul says) *bear the things done in the body, according to what he hath done, whether it be good or evil*. Now this state generally taken (as respecting both the righteous and blessed, the wicked and cursed persons) for that it doth suppose a perpetual duration in being and sense, may be called *everlasting life*; although life (as being commonly apprehended the principal good, and because all men naturally have a most strong desire to preserve it; with reference also, probably, to the law, wherein continuance of life is proposed as the main reward of obedience) is used to denote peculiarly the blessed state; and death (the most abominable and terrible thing to nature, the most extreme also of legal punishments threatened upon the transgressors of the law) is also used to signify the condition of the damned; the resurrection of life, and resurrection of damnation; everlasting life, and everlasting punishment being opposed: although, I say, life be thus commonly taken (as also the resurrection it self, by an *ἐνστανσις*, is sometimes appropriated to the righteous) yet the reason of the case requires, that here we understand it generally so as to comprehend both states: both being matters of faith equally necessary, and of like fundamental consequence; both yielding the highest encouragements to good practice, and determents from bad. For as on the one hand, what can more strongly excite us to the performance of our duty, than an assurance of obtaining hereby so happy a state? What can more efficaciously withdraw us from impiety, than being certain thereby to lose, and fall short of it? so on the other hand, What can more vehemently provoke us to obedience, than being perswaded, that we shall thereby avoid eternal misery? What can more powerfully deter us from sin, than considering, that by the commission of it we shall expose our selves to that wretched state? Infinitely stupid and obdurate we must be, if the consideration what these states are doth not produce these effects.

What is the state of life? It is a state of highest dignity and glory; of sweetest comfort and joy; of joy full in measure, pure in quality, perpetual in duration, in all respects perfect to the utmost capacity of our nature; wherein all our parts and faculties shall be raised to their highest pitch of perfection, our bodies shall become free from all corruptibility and decay, all weakness and disease, all grossness and unweildyness, all deformity and defilement; for they shall (as S. Paul teaches us) be rendred incorruptible, strong, healthful, glorious and spiritual; our souls also shall in their faculties be advanced, in their inclinations rectified, in their appetites satisfied; the understanding becoming full of light, clear and distinct in knowledge of truth, free from ignorance, doubt and error; the will being steddily inclined to good, ready to comply with God's will; free from all weakness, and all perverseness; our affections being set in right order and frame; with a constant regularity tending unto that which is really best, and taking a full delight therein: wherein we shall enjoy the blisful sight of God, smiling in love and favour upon us; the presence of our gracious Redeemer, embracing us with most tender affection; the society of the Holy Angels, and of the just made perfect; whose company and conversation, how unconceivably sweet and delightful must it be? wherein nothing adverse, or troublesome can befall us; no unpleasant or offensive object shall present it self to us; no want or need of any thing

thing shall appear; no care, or fear, or suspicion; no labour or toil; no sorrow or pain, no distast or regret, no stir or contention, no listlessness or satiety shall be felt, or shall come near us; where God (as it is in the *Apocalypse*) will wipe every tear from our eyes (of them who shall come there) and death shall be no more; nor sorrow, nor clamour, nor pain any more: it is in fine a state in excellency surpassing all words to express it, all thoughts to conceive it; of which the brightest splendours, and the choicest pleasures here are but obscure shadows, and faint resemblances; comparable to which no eye hath seen, nor ear hath heard any thing; nor hath it ascended into any heart of man to conceive the like; as *S. Paul* out of the Prophet *Esay* telleth us. Which state, seeing by a pious life we certainly do acquire a right unto, and shall enjoy a possession of; but from an impious life do forfeit all pretence thereto, and shall infallibly be deprived of it: Are we not infinitely mad, are we not extremely enemies, and injurious to our selves, if we do not embrace the one, and eschew the other?

Again, What is the other state, that of death? What but a state of lowest disgrace and ignominy; of utter shame and confusion; of intolerable pains and miseries, without any ease or respite, without any hope or remedy, without any cessation or end; wherein we shall not only for ever be secluded from God's Presence and Favour; not only be deprived of all rest, comfort and joy; but detrued into utmost wretchedness, into a condition far more dark and dismal, more forlorn and disconsolate than we can imagin; which not the sharpest pain of body, nor the bitterest anxiety of mind, which any of us hath ever felt, can in any measure represent; wherein our bodies shall be afflicted continually by a sulphureous flame, not only scorching the skin, but piercing the inmost sinews, our souls shall incessantly be gnawed upon by a worm (the worm of bitter remorse for our wretched perverseness and folly, the worm of horrid despair ever to get out of that estate) under which unexpressible vexations, always enduring pangs of death, always in sense and in desire dying, we shall never be able to dye: which miserable state, since it is by performing our duty surely avoided, since by neglecting, or transgressing God's laws it is inevitable incurr'd; if we do not accordingly chuse to demean our selves, how infinitely careless are we of our own good, how desperately bent to our own ruin?

If these considerations make no impression on us; What can any reason effect? What can any words signify? how monstrously sottish, or wild do we appear to be? I conclude with Prayer to Almighty God, That according to his infinite mercy, he by his gracious assistance leading us in the ways of piety and righteousness, would bring us to everlasting life and happiness; that he by the same powerful grace withdrawing us from impiety and iniquity, would rescue us from eternal death, and misery; *To him, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, be for ever all Glory and Praise. Amen.*

A

T A B L E

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Late MASTER of *Trinity-College* in *Cambridge*.

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By his Grace Dr. *JOHN TILLOTSON*,
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SERMON,

VOL. III.

SERMON I.

Of Doing all in the Name of Christ.

COLOSS. iii. 17.

And whatsoever ye do in word, or in deed, do all in the Name of the Lord Jesus.



Whatsoever ye do in word, or deed: A Duty we see the Apostle injoyns us of a large extent, and therefore surely of a great Importance; indeed of an universal concernment; such as must go along with, must run through all our Words and all our Actions. We are therefore much obliged, and much concerned to attend thereto, and to practise it carefully. But first we must understand what it is; the doing whereof depends upon understanding the sense of that phrase (*doing in the name of Jesus*) being somewhat ambiguous, and capable of divers meanings; which both in common use, and in H. Scripture we find it to bear different, according to the variety of matters or occasions to which it is applyed; most of which are comprehended, and (as it were) complicated in that general one, according to which we may be said to do that in another person's name, which we do with any kind of reference or regard to him; such as our relations, or our obligations to that person do require; and the particular nature of the action doth admit. And according to this acception I conceive it safest and best to interpret Saint *Paul's* meaning here, supposing it to comprehend all the more special, and restrained meanings of this phrase, truly applicable to the present matter; of which meanings I shall endeavour in order to propound the chief; and together, both to unfold and to inculcate the several respective branches of this duty. Yet first of all rejecting one or two, which cannot well be applied to this purpose.

To do in another's name, doth sometimes denote the assuming another's Person, or pretending to be the same with him, the very He. So, *many shall come in my name*, (Prophefied our Saviour) *saying, I am Christ*: To do thus in *Jesus* his Name, is the part of an Antichrist, and an Impostor. That sense therefore hath nothing to do here.

Again; to do in another's Name, doth often imply doing *alterius loco*, or *vice*; in another's Name, or stead, as a deputy, or substitute; representing the Person, or supplying the office of another. So did the Prophets *come, and speak in God's Name*; what they declared, or enjoined, being therefore said to be declared, and enjoined by God himself: *I speak unto you, rising up early, and speaking*, (*viz.* by the Prophets, whom he sent, and who are said to come and speak in his Name.) And thus the Apostles spake in *Christ's* Name: *We are Ambassadors for Christ; we pray you in Christ's stead, be reconciled*. Thus also Princes govern, and Magistrates execute Justice in God's Name; whence they are stiled *Gods*, as being his Lieutenants, administering that Judgment, which belongs originally and principally to him. Now for this sense, neither

is it so proper, or convenient here; it agreeing only to some particular Persons, and to some peculiar Actions of them; insomuch, that others presuming to act, according to that manner or kind, in *Jesus* his Name, shall thereby become usurpers and deceivers. We (and to us all this Precept is directed) shall heinously transgress our duty, doing any thing thus in his Name, without his Letters of Credence; without being specially called or sent; or being duly by him authorized thereto.

These, and such like senses the present matter doth not well admit; the rest that suit thereto I shall with some distinction in order represent.

I. To do in another's Name sometimes doth signify to do it out of affection or honour to another; for another's sake, because we love, or esteem him; *ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι* being equivalent to *ἐνεκα τοῦ ὀνόματος*, and *διὰ τὸ ὄνομα*. Thus it is said, *Whosoever shall give you a cup of Water to drink in my name; because ye are Christ's* (is added by way of interpretation, that is, out of respect to Christ, because of your relation to him) *shall not lose his reward*. And thus surely we ought to do every thing in *Jesus* his Name; all our Actions ought to proceed from a principle of grateful love, and reverence towards our gracious Redeemer. Let all your Actions be done in Charity, saith the Apostle; if in Charity to our Neighbour, then much more in love to him, for whose sake we are especially bound to love our Neighbour. Upon any undertaking, or applying our selves to action, we should so reflect thereupon as to consider, whether that we are going about be apt to please him, and conducive to his honour; if so, remembering what he hath done and suffered for us, (what excellent Blessings he hath purchased for us, what exceeding Benefits he hath conferr'd upon us) we should out of love and respect to him readily perform it; but if it otherwise appear displeasing, or dishonourable to him, we should, from the same Principles, carefully decline it. The duty is certain, and the reason thereof evident; for inducement to the practice thereof observe St. Paul's example; who thus represents himself in the main employment of his life, acting, *The love of Christ constrains us; judging this, that he died for all, that they who live might not live to themselves, but to him that died and rose for them*: The love of Christ, begot and maintained by a consideration of his great benefits conferr'd on him, was the spring that set St. Paul on work, that excited, and urged him forward to action. Thus doing, we shall do in *Jesus* his Name; but if we act out of love to our selves (to promote our own interests, to gratify our own desires, to procure Credit or Praise to our selves) we act only in our own Names, and for our own sakes; not in the Name, or for the sake of *Jesus*.

II. To do in another's Name implies doing (chiefly) for the interest, or advantage of another; upon another's behalf or accompt; as the servants, or factors of another. For, when the business is another's, and the fruit, or benefit emergent belong to another, he that prosecutes that business may well be, and is commonly supposed to act in that other's name. Thus our Saviour is in St. John's Gospel expressed *to come, to speak, to act in God's Name*; because he did God's business (*the work which God gave him to accomplish*) and entirely sought the glory of God, as he there himself often avouches and professes. And thus (in imitation of him) ought we also to do all things in his Name; remembering that we are not our own Men, but the Servants of *Jesus*, (Servants to him not only by nature, as to our Maker and Preserver; but by purchase, as to our Redeemer, who bought us with the greatest Price; and by compact also, we having freely undertaken his Service, and expecting wages from him) that we have therefore no business or employment properly our own, but that all our business is (or should be) to serve him, and promote his glory; *Whether we eat or drink, or whatever we do, we do all to the glory of our Lord*. Whatever I say, we do, we therefore should perform it with this formal reference, as it were, toward *Jesus*, as his Servants, from conscience of the duty we owe to him; with intention therein to serve him; in expectation of reward only from him. So doth St. Paul (in prosecution of this same Precept) beneath in this Chapter injoin us, that *whatever we do, we perform it heartily, as to the Lord, and not to men, knowing (or considering) that from the Lord we shall receive the recompence of the inheritance; for that we serve the Lord Christ*. In like manner elsewhere he teaches us to do what we do not as pleasers

Comp. Mark 9.
41.
Matt. 10.
41.
24. 9.
19. 29.
Matt. 18. 5.
1 Cor. 16. 14.

ΦΙΛΟΤΙΜΗΣ-
ΣΑ ΔΥΤΟ
ΔΑΡΕΣΟΙ ΕΙΝΑΙ.
1 Cor 5. 9.
14.
1 Thess. 2. 6.
Tit. 1. 11.
1 Pet. 5. 2.
Philip. 1. 15.
Matt. 23. 5.

Joh. 7. 18. 8.
54. 10. 25.
5. 43. 36. 6.
28. 9. 3. 4.
1 Cor. 6. 19.
7. 23.
Heb. 9. 12.
1 Pet. 1. 18.
Rom. 14. 8, 9.

1 Cor. 10. 31.

Col. 3. 22, 23.

fers of men (not upon any inferiour accounts) but as Servants of Christ, Eph. 6. 6, 9. knowing and considering that we have a Master in Heaven. But,

III. Doing in another's Name imports frequently doing by the appointment and command, or by the commission and authority of another. *Ἐν ποτὶ δυνάμει* Act. 4. 7. *καὶ ἐν ποτὶ ὀνόματι,* By what power, and in what name have ye done these things; say the high Priests to the Apostles? that is, Who did appoint or authorize you to do thus? their answer was ready; In the Name of Jesus, who had sent, commissioned, and commanded them to Preach, and propagate that Doctrine. Joh. 3. 36. 37. 43. 14. 54. 17. 18. And thus we are also bound to do all things in the Name of Jesus, regulating all our Actions by his Law; conforming our whole Lives to his Will; acting, not only out of good Principles (Principles of Love and Conscience) but according to right Rules; the Rules of his Word and Example, which he hath declared, and prescribed to us: for what is done beside his Warrant and Will; cannot be rightly esteemed done in his Name; will not as so be avowed, or accepted by him; no unjust or impious action will he upon any terms countenance or patronize. It was once a famous saying, *All Mischief begins in Nomine Domini;* and much surely, more than one way, hath been done under the like Notion or Pretence; but this will not serve to excuse the doing of that, in the day of final reckoning for our actions. For, *there will be many* (we are taught) Matt. 7. 23. *that shall in that day by specious professions of having done this or that in Christ's Name, veil their transgressions, and their neglects of duty, saying, Lord, Lord, have we not in thy Name prophesied; and in thy Name cast out Devils, and in thy Name done many wonderful things?* who yet, our Lord himself assures us, shall have this reply made to them, *I never knew you, depart from me ye workers of iniquity.* Luc. 13. 26. There will be those that shall claim acquaintance with Christ in such terms: *Lord, we have eaten and drank before thee; and thou hast taught in our Streets;* whom yet, our Lord will disclaim with a *Depart ye from me, all ye workers of iniquity:* 'Tis not, we see, Prophesying in Christ's Name (or Preaching about him) nor frequent attendance upon those who do so; nor speaking much or hearing much concerning him; 'tis not having great gifts or endowments conferr'd by Christ (not even so great as that of working Miracles); 'tis not familiar converse with Christ, or making frequent addressees to him, that can sanctify all a Man's actions, or so entitle them to the Name of Christ, as to secure his Person from being disavowed and rejected by Christ; 'tis only the conforming all our Actions to his holy Laws, that can assure us to be acknowledged and accepted by him. This I could wish they would consider, who seem, by such pretences, to commend, or excuse their actions, although otherwise irregular and plainly contrary to the laws of Christ; such as those of being meek and charitable toward all Men; living peaceably our selves, and endeavouring to promote Peace among others; abstaining from rash and hard censures; from reviling and defaming others; paying reverence and obedience to Superiours; and the like Laws of Christ, not only express and manifest, but even of the highest rank and consequence among them; being mainly conducing to that which our Lord especially tenders, the publick welfare and benefit of Mankind; the violation whereof cannot be justified by pretending any special regard whatever to Christ, or any collateral performance done, whether truly or seemingly, in his Name. We do but deceive our selves, if we conceit, that because we think much, or speak much of Jesus; or have a zeal for something good, all our actions are done in his Name; No, it only can be justly impressed upon, can warrant and sanctify actions truly good and agreeable to his Law; it were an abuse and forgery to do it, like stamping the King's Name (or Image) on counterfeit metal; upon brass or tin, instead of gold or silver. Good Intention and good Principles are indeed (as it were) the form and Soul of good Actions; but their being just and lawful are the body and matter of them; necessarily also concurring to their essence and integrity; they cannot subsist without it, but must pass (as it were) for ghosts and shadows. We are therefore concerned in all our doings to have an especial regard to Christ's Law as their rule; that will render them capable of Christ's Name, and denominate them Christian.

IV. Hereto we may add, that what we do in imitation of Jesus, and in conformity to his Practice (that living rule and copy proposed to us) we may

be said peculiarly to do in his Name. As a Picture useth to bear his Name, whom it was made to represent, and whom it resembles; so if we set *Christ's* Example before us, and endeavour to transcribe it; if our life in the principal lineaments of sanctity and goodness do resemble his holy life; they may well bear his Name. But if our practice be unlike and unsuitable to his, we cannot affix his Name thereto without great presumption and abuse; such as would be committed, if to a draught of foul hue, and ugly features, we should attribute the Name of some most handsome and goodly Person, of high worth and quality. To do thus in *Jesus* his Name (with such a regard to him) is a duty often prescribed unto us, not only as relating to some cases and actions, (as when his Charity, his Patience, his Humility, his Meekness are signally commended to our imitation) but generally, *He, that saith he abideth in him, ought as he walked, so himself also to walk*; that is, whoever professes himself a Christian ought to conform the whole tenour of his Conversation to that of *Jesus*; to endeavour in every imitable Perfection to resemble him. So that whenever we undertake any action, we should do well to look upon this Pattern, thus (as it were) examining and inquiring of our selves; What did my Master in this or the like case; do I do the same thing, do I act from the same Principles, do I proceed in the same manner as he did; am I herein his Disciple and Follower? if so, in his Name let me go on chearfully; if not, let me forbear. Doing this will not be only according to our duty, but an especial help and furtherance of good practice.

V. To do in another's Name doth sometimes import doing by any power derived, or virtue imparted by another; for that a thing so done may be imputed, should be ascribed to that other. So, *Through thee* (saith the *Psalmist*) *will we push down our Enemies, in thy Name will we throw down those that hate us*, (through thee, and in thy Name signify the same thing). So did the *Apostles* cast out Devils, and perform their other Miracles in *Jesus* his Name (*διὰ τοῦ ὀνόματος*, by his Name, 'tis sometime expressed) that is by a divine virtue imparted from him. To this I add another acceptation, scarce different (at least as to our purpose) from that, according to which doing in another's Name signifies doing it in trust, or confidence reposed upon another, with expectation of aid, or hope of good success from another. So, *we rest on thee*, (said good King *Asa*) *and in thy name we go against this multitude*; in thy Name, that is, hoping for assistance and success from thee. And thus it is said, that *David went out against Goliath in the name of the Lord of hosts*; that is, confiding in God's help as his only weapon and defence: Thus also did the *H. Apostles* work their Miracles in *Jesus* his Name, *ἐν τῇ πίστει τοῦ ὀνόματος αὐτοῦ*, by faith in his Name, (saith St. *Peter*) *his name hath made this Man strong*; that is, we did only trust in his divine Power, and it was that Power of his which restored that weak Person to his strength. And thus also it is our duty to do all things in our Saviour's Name; with faith and hope in him; wholly relying upon him for direction and assistance; expecting from him only a blessing and happy issue of our undertakings. What we do in confidence of our own wisdom or ability, or in assiance upon the help of any other Person or thing, we do in our own Name, or in the Name of that thing (or that Person) in whom we so confide; to our selves, or to such auxiliaries we shall be ready to attribute the success, and to render the glory of the Performance; *glorying in our own arm, and sacrificing to our Net*. But what we undertake only depending upon our Lord for ability, and success, may therefore bear his Name, because our faith derives the Power from him, which enables us happily to perform it; so that the performance may truly be attributed to him, and to him we shall be apt to ascribe it. And thus, I say, we are certainly obliged to do every thing in his Name; (in his Name alone;) retaining a constant sense both of our own infirmity, and of the impotency of all other created things; and consequently a total diffidence both in our selves, and in them; but reposing all our trust in the direction, and assistance of our All-wise, and All-mighty Lord; of *Jesus*, to whom all power in heaven and earth is given, (who indeed had it originally by Nature as God; but also farther hath acquired it by desert and purchase) into whose hands all things are given; and all things are put under his feet; who hath obtained this Power in design to use it for our good; and is thereby always

Eph. 5. 1. 2.
1 Cor. 10. 1.
Joh. 15. 12,
13. 14.
Heb. 12. 2.
Joh. 13. 15.
Phil. 2. 5.
1 Pet. 2. 21.
1 Joh. 2. 6.

Ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι
LXX.
Psal. 44. 4.
89. 24.
Matt. 7. 22.
Mar. 9. 38.
Act. 3. 6. 4.
10. 30.
Joh. 17. 11.

2 Chro. 14. 11.

1 Sam. 17. 45.

Act. 3. 16.

Hab. 1. 16.

Mat. 28. 18.
Joh. 3. 25.
13. 3. 17. 2.
Heb. 1. 2. 2. 8.
Eph. 1. 22.
1 Cor. 15. 27.
Phil. 2. 9.
Apoc. 5. 12.

ways ready to help us in our need, if we have recourse unto him, and rely upon him; making him what St. Paul styles him, *Our hope*; our only hope; renouncing all other confidences not subordinate to him. To do so is a duty evidently grounded as well upon the reason of the thing, as upon the will and command of God; to do otherwise is no less a palpable folly, than a manifest injury to God. For, in truth, neither have we, or any other created thing any power, other than such as he is pleased freely to dispense; and which is not continually both for its being and its efficacy subject to him, so that he may at his pleasure subtract it, or obstruct its effect: *No King is saved by the multitude of an host; a mighty man is not delivered by much strength; a horse is a vain thing for safety*: Whence 'tis plain, that we cannot, upon any created power, ground a solid assurance of success in any undertaking; it will be *leaning upon a broken reed* which cannot support us, and will pierce our hands) both a vain and a mischievous confidence; that will abuse us, bringing both disappointment and guilt upon us; the guilt of wronging our Lord many ways; by arrogating to our selves, or assigning to others what he only doth truly deserve, and what peculiarly of right belongs to him; withdrawing the same from him; implying him unable or unwilling to assist us, and do us good; neglecting to use that strength which he so dearly purchased and so graciously tenders; so disappointing him, and defeating (as it were) his purposes of favour and mercy towards us. On the other side, trusting only upon our Saviour, we act wisely and justly, gratefully and officiously; for that in doing so, we build our hopes upon most sure grounds; upon a wisdom that cannot be deceived; upon a strength that cannot be withstood; upon a goodness that hath no limits; upon a fidelity that can never fail. For that we act with an humility, and sobriety of mind suitable to our condition, and to the reason of things; for that we thereby declare our good opinion of him as only able, and very willing to do us good; for that we render him his just honour and due; we comply with his earnest desires, we promote his gracious designs of mercy and kindness toward us. Hence it is that every where in H. Scripture God so highly commends, so greatly encourages this duty of trusting alone in him; that he so ill resents, and so strongly deters from the breach or omission thereof; *Thus saith the Lord, Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord: for he shall be like the heath in the desert; and shall not see when good cometh, but shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness; in a salt land and not inhabited. Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is; for he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river; and shall not see when heat cometh; but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit*: thus in that place, thus in innumerable others we are threatned not only with disappointment, and bad success in our undertakings, but with severe punishment, if we betake our selves to other succours, and neglect or distrust, or (in so doing) desert God; but are encouraged, not only with assurance of prosperous success, but of additional rewards, if intirely in our proceedings we depend upon and adhere to God. Thus we should do in all (even our most common and ordinary) affairs, which no less than the rest are subject to his power, and governed by his care. For you know how St. James doth reprehend it as a piece of naughty boasting and arrogance, to say, *The morrow we will go to this City, and stay there a year, and trade and gain*; instead of saying, *if the Lord will, we will live, and do this or that*; that is, to resolve upon, undertake, or prosecute any affair without submission to God's will, and dependance on his Providence: But especially we ought, in matters and actions more spiritual, to practise this duty; for that to the performing of these, we have of our selves a peculiar impotence and unfitness; needing therefore a more special assistance from our Lord; that the success of them more particularly depends upon him; that the glory of them in an especial manner is appropriate, and (as it were) consecrate to him.

1 Tim. 1. 1.

Eccl. 9. 11. *The race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong.**By strength shall no man prevail.*

1 Sam. 2. 9.

Psal. 33. 17. 146. 3. 44. 3.

Ila. 36. 6.

Ila. 43. 11. — *Beside me there is no Saviour.*

Hof. 13. 4. 10. Psal. 106. 21.

Jer. 14. 8.

Psal. 146. 5. 40. 4. 44. 6. 33. 18. 147. 11. 34. 22. 125. 1. 31. 19. 61. 4. 91. 4. 118. 8. 78. 22. 66. 2. 112. 7.

Ila. 51. 5. 57. 13. 50. 7. 26. 3.

Jer. 14. 8.

Jer. 17. 5. 6. &c.

Matt. 10. 29.

Jam. 4. 13.

Οὐτε γὰρ
ἀνθρώπων
τὴν ἀνδρείαν
ἐπὶ τοῖς θεοῖς
συναναφύκει
ἀπεχέσθαι.
Ant. 3. 13.

Psal. 44. 6.

Joh. 15. 5.

Act. 3. 12, 16.

Joh. 14. 12.

Phil. 4. 13.

2 Cor. 3. 5.

Οὐδὲν ἀνυ-
πατήσκει ὑμῖν.
Mat. 17. 20.
21. 21.
Luk. 17. 6.
Mat. 14. 29.
Luk. 10. 19.

2 Cor. 9. 21.

Joh. 14. 13.
15. 16. 16.
23. 24.

Eph. 5. 20. 3.
21.

If it be a folly and a crime, to think we can do any thing without God, 'tis much more so to think we can do any thing good without him; 'tis an arrogance; 'tis an idolatry, 'tis a sacrilege much more vain and wicked to do so. To imagine that we can, by the force of our own reason and resolution, achieve any of those most high and hard enterprizes, to which by the rules of virtue and piety we are engaged; that we can, by our own conduct and prowess, encounter and withstand, defeat and vanquish those so crafty, so mighty enemies of our salvation (our own fleshly desires; the menaces and allurements of the World; the slights and powers of Darkness) is much a worse presumption, than in other affairs of greatest difficulty to expect success without the divine assistance and blessing; than in other most dangerous battels, to think we can, *by our own bow, and by our own spear save our selves*; that we can obtain victory otherwise, than from his hand and disposal, who is the Lord of Hosts. Reason tells us, and experience also shews, and our Saviour hath expressly said it, That (in these things) *without him* (without his especial influence and blessing) *we can do nothing*; he tells us, that we are but branches, inserted into him; so that, without continually drawing sap from him, we can have no life or vigour spiritual. The wisest and best of Men have, by their practice, taught us to acknowledge so much; to depend wholly upon him, to ascribe all to him in this kind. *Why* (say St. Peter and St. John) *do ye wonder at this; or why gaze ye upon us, as if by our own power or piety, we had made this man walk? — His name* (the name of Jesus) *through Faith in his name, hath made this man strong*: that acknowledgement indeed concerns a miraculous work; but spiritual works are in reality no less, they requiring as much or more of virtue supernatural, or the present interposition of God's hand to effect them; they make less shew without, but need as great efficacy within; so our Saviour, it seems, did imply, when he said, *He that believes in me, the works that I do he shall do, and greater works than these*. Every good and faithful Man doth not work Miracles, yet somewhat greater, it seems, by the grace of Christ, he performs: However, to these St. Paul referr'd, when he affirmed, *I can do all things in Christ that strengtheneth me*; nothing was so hard that he feared to attempt, that he despaired to master and go through with by the help of Christ; and, Not (saith he again) *that we are sufficient of our selves to think any thing of our selves; but our sufficiency is of God*: He was as sensible of his own inability, as he was confident in the gracious help of Christ. Thus should we do all things in the Name of Jesus; and 'tis not only a duty to do it, but it may be a great encouragement to us, that we are capable of doing it; a great comfort to consider, that in all honest undertakings, we have so ready, and so sure an aid to second and further us in them; confiding in which, nothing is so difficult, but we may easily accomplish (*a grain of faith will be able to remove mountains*); nothing is so hazardous, but we may safely venture on (*walking on the Sea, treading upon serpents and scorpions; daring all the power of the enemy*) In his Name we may, if our duty or good reason calls us forth (how small and weak soever, how destitute soever of defensive arms, or weapons offensive) naked and unarmed, with a sling and a stone, go out against the biggest, and best armed *Philistine*, nothing doubting of victory; Our weakness itself (if we be humbly conscious and sensible thereof) will be an advantage to us (as it was to St. Paul) to all effects and purposes, *the grace of our Lord will be sufficient for us*, if we apply it, and trust therein. But farther,

VI. To do in another's Name may denote, to do it with such regard to another, that we acknowledge (that, I say, we heartily and thankfully acknowledge) our hope of prospering in what we do; our expectation of acceptance, favour, or reward to be grounded on him; that they are procured by his merits and means, are bestowed only for his sake. Thus our Saviour bids us *offer our prayers in his name*; that is, representing unto God his meritorious performances in our behalf, as the ground of our access to God, of our hope to obtain from him what we request. So also we are enjoined to *give thanks in his name*; that is, with persuasion and acknowledgement, that only in respect to him we become capable to receive, or enjoy any good thing; that in effect, all the blessings by divine mercy vouchsafed us have been procured by him for us, are through him conveyed unto us. And thus also we should do all things in the name of Jesus, offering

offering all our Deeds to God, as sacrifices and services unworthy of acceptance, both in themselves, and as proceeding from us; but pleasing, and acceptable to God only for his sake. We should do well, upon all occasions, to remember our natural condition, and the general state of Mankind; such as it was before he did undertake, such as it would have continued still, had he not undertaken for it; That our race had forfeited, and was fallen from God's favour; having injured him beyond all power of making him any reparation or satisfaction; that thence it was secluded from all means and hopes apparent of happiness, was exposed and tended downright unto misery; that we consequently had no ground to hope, that God (from whom no less in mind and in deed, than by reason of our guilt and state of condemnation we were estranged) would, in kindness, bestow any good upon us, or from us accept favourably any thing we should do. But that, by our Saviour's performances, the case is altered; He, by his entire obedience, having so pleased God, by his patient submission to God's will, having so appeased his anger, and satisfy'd his justice, that God is not only reconciled, but hath an especial favour, bears an earnest good-will toward us. That now the good things we possess, we may truly esteem as blessings, and enjoy them with real comfort, as proceeding from mercy and kindness; now what we honestly endeavour, we may hope shall please God; now we have a free access to God, and may cheerfully present our sacrifices of duty and devotion, with a full perswasion that they shall be accepted. But all this happiness, all these favours and privileges, we must always remember to come from the continued procurement and mediation of the *Beloved*; so as ever to be ready to acknowledge it, and to return our thanks therefore. To this sense that our *Apostle* here had an especial regard, the words immediately following imply — *Doing all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God, and the Father by him*; that is, in all things we do, taking occasion to render thanks to God, as for his sake being merciful and bountiful to us; bestowing upon us the good we enjoy, blessing our endeavours, accepting our performances. We must not conceit, that any regard, any mercy, any favour, any reward is due to us in equity, is in effect conferr'd upon us upon our personal score (for, how mean things are we in comparison of his greatness; how vile and filthy things must we appear to his most pure, and all-discerning eyes, how unworthy of his regard and of his affection must we needs take our selves to be, if we do but well consider, and are acquainted with our selves?) But that *in him* (i. e. for his sake, and by his means) *God hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings*, in him *ἐχαρίτωσεν ἡμᾶς*, *God hath favoured*, and cast his Grace upon us; valuing us notwithstanding all our imperfections, loving us notwithstanding the spots with which we are defiled; notwithstanding all the offences we have committed; for the relation and alliance we have to *Jesus*. Nor must we look on our services (the best we are able to perform) as in themselves grateful or satisfactory: For all of them, if we mark them well, we shall find not only quite *unprofitable to God*, but very defective, in many respects; for, Who can say, he performs any thing both in kind, in manner, in degree thoroughly right and good; with that ardency of love he owes to God, with that purity of intention, with that earnest vigour of spirit, with that undistractedness of mind, with which he should perform it? No; in all our flock we cannot pick out a sacrifice entire and unblemished; such as God requires, such as duty exacts of us. They need therefore (all our services need) to be commended and compleated by the beloved Son his perfectly well pleasing performances; they need to be cleansed and hallowed, by passing through the hands of our most Holy and undefiled High-priest: to become sweet and savoury (or to receive that *δοῦλω δωδίας*, which St. Paul speaks of) from being offered up *in his censer*. In fine; all our actions should, in our intention, be works of religion dedicated to God's service and honour; sacrifices, as it were, of gratitude and homage to God; so they ought all to be offered up in the Name of *Jesus*. I add farther,

VII. Lastly, that we do in the Name of *Jesus*, may well imply doing with invocation of him: thus we may understand that place of St. James, where the Elders are advised to pray, and anoint the sick in the Lord's name; for, to anoint them, imploring our Lord's blessing upon them, and upon those means used

Rom. 3. 23.

11. 32.
Gal. 3. 22.

Acts 3. 46.

Eph. 2. 17.

3. 12.

Ἐν πνεύματι

συν.

Eph. 1. 6.

Eph. 1. 3, 6.

Heb. 7. 26.

Eph. 5. 2.

Rev. 8. 3, 5.

Jam. 5. 14.

In locum.

Ἄυτὸν καλῶν βοηθῶν, ἐπὶ πάντων
περιτερον αὐτῷ ἐνχοίμεν. Ἄπλ. τῶν
παραγμάτων.

1 Tim. 4. 5.

Δεῖ πάσης τῆς πράξεως προσηγορίᾳς
τῷ προσευχῶ. M. Erem.

Μηδὲν μῆτε ποιῶμεν μῆτε λέγομεν
περὶ ἢ τὸν θεὸν καλεῖσθαι ἢ παρακα-
λεῖσθαι συναδικῶν τῶν ἐν χερσὶν ἡμῶν
ἀπάντων. Chryl.

Τὸτο δὴγε πάντες ὅσοι καὶ ἐξ ἐξα-
χὺ σωροσυνῆ μετέχουσιν ἐπὶ πάσῃ
ὁρμῇ καὶ σμικρῇ καὶ μεγάλῃ παραγμά-
τῳ θεὸν δεῖ πρὸς καλεῖσθαι. Plato. Tim.

Vid. Epist. 8. Art. Epict. 11. 18.

1 Thes. 5. 17. Luk. 18. 1.

Rom. 12. 12. Colof. 4. 2.

Ἐκτενᾶς.

continue with Patience, and earnestness in Prayer; but that we should annex it to, or interpose it among all our actions, undertaking nothing (at least of consideration or moment) without it. We should do it (our Saviour commands)

Luk. 11. 36.

Eph. 6. 18.

* Eph. 5. 19.

Ἐν καρδίᾳ.

Phil. 4. 6, 7.

ἐν παντὶ καιρῷ, that is, *on every occasion*; and Saint Paul gives the same direction, *Praying*, says he, *ἐν παντὶ καιρῷ, on all opportunities, with all prayer and supplication in spirit*; (in spirit, that is, I take it, * *in our hearts* at least, and with secret elevations of our mind, if not with our mouth and voice.) And

Ἐν παντὶ.

Bene ac sapienter majores instituerunt,
ut rerum agendarum, ita dicendi initium
a precationibus caperetur; quod nihil rite,
nihilque providenter homines sine Deorum
immortalium ope, consilio, honore auspica-
rentur. Plin. in Paneg.

Job 18. 7. Isa. 30. 1. Hof. 10. 6.

Prov. 1. 25, 30. Plal. 106. 13. 16. 7.

73. 24. 107. 11.

Jer. 10. 23.

Prov. 20. 24. 16. 9.

(implying, since God only knows what is best for us, that we of our selves without his direction. know not what to do, whether to go:) The H. Psalmist signifies the same in those words (very encouraging to the practice of this duty)

Psal. 25. 12, 9.

What man is he that feareth the Lord? (that feareth him, that is, who worship-
peth him, and seeketh his guidance) *him shall he teach in the way that he shall
choose.* We need also (being our selves not only weak and infirm, but incon-
stant and unstable) God's assistance, and upholding hand in the pursuance of
our well-chosen designs (that we may use the best means, and proceed in a
streight course; that we may persist upright and steady in our Proceedings) that
which the *Wise man* seems to call, the establishing of our thoughts, and promi-
ses, as a consequence, upon our seeking God's assistance in our actions, and
relying thereon; *Commit*, saith he, *thy works unto the Lord, and thy thoughts*

Prov. 16. 9.

shall be established; (thou shalt drive on thy good purposes steadily, without
stumbling or falling; at least irrecoverably.) So the *Psalmist* assures us concern-
ing a good man: *The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord; none of his*

Psal. 37. 23.

24. 17. 31.

*steps shall slide; though he fall he shall not utterly be cast down; for the Lord up-
holdeth him with his hand.* We also farther, as to the final success of our af-
fairs, stand in need of God's blessing; that he, upon whose will altogether de-
pends the disposal of all events, should bestow a good issue unto our endea-
vours, that they prove not matter of discouragement, or discomfort to us;
that which also the *Psalmist* assures us of obtaining, upon condition of our im-
ploring and depending upon God for it; *Commit thy way* (saith he) *unto the*

Psal. 37. 5.

119. 5. 133.

Lord; trust also in him, and he shall bring it to pass. We do thus need in all
our affairs the direction, assistance and blessing of our Lord;
but shall not have them without Prayer; for, the rule is,
Ask and have, seek and find; without asking we are not like-
ly

Luke 11. 9. 10. Job. 14. 13. Psal.

9. 10.

ly to obtain those gifts; without seeking we must not hope to find those benefits from God. If we are so proud, as to think we do not need them, or so negligent, as not to mind them; or so distrustful of the divine power or goodness, that we imagine he cannot or will not afford them to us; we are like to be so unhappy as to want them. God expects from us, that we should, in whatever we do, acknowledge him; ('tis the *Wise-man's* expression, *In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths*;) acknowledge him as the only faithful guide and counsellour; as the only sufficient helper and protector; as the only free arbitrator and donor of good success. Nothing therefore is well done, which is not thus done; we cannot be satisfied in what we do; we cannot hope for a comfortable end thereof; we cannot expect a blessing from God, if we have refused, or if we have neglected the recommending our proceedings to his care. We can, I say, do nothing; not eat, not sleep, not trade, not travel, not study with any true content, any reasonable security, and satisfactory hope, if we have not first humbly implored God's favour; committing our selves, and our business into his hand, that hand which dispenseth all good, which alone can keep off all danger and mischief from us. *God shall send his Angel before thee*: so did our Father *Abraham* Gen. 23. 7. send his servant about his business; having questionless before commended it to God by Prayer. *God Almighty give you mercy before the man*: so did *Jacob* Gen. 43. 14. give his sons their dispatches toward *Egypt*: In such a manner did we enter upon all our Affairs, we could not but be full of hope, and void of care concerning them; for that commonly we are so full of anxiety about the event of what we undertake, whence doth it arise, but from a neglect of this duty? for, having committed our business into so sure a hand, how could we farther be solicitous about it? Had we, according to St. *Peter's* advice, *Cast our care upon the Lord*; 1 Pet. 5. 7. or, *cast our burden upon him* (as the *Psalmist* exhorts us) had we duly sought and Psa. 55. 22. invoked him, who *never faileth them that seek him, who is nigh to all them* Psa. 9. 10. *that call upon him*; we should not have such a load of troublesome care resting upon us; our hearts would be light, and free as to all these things; we should be secure, that nothing very bad, or disastrous, could befall us; we should experience it true, what the Prophet affirms in that Prayer or *Psalms* to Psa. 145. 18. God; *Thou shalt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee*: Be Psa. 112. 7, 8. careful for nothing, Saint *Paul* bids us, *but in every thing let your requests be* Isa. 26. 3. *made known to God*; if we perform the latter part, the former will naturally be Phil. 4. 6, 7. consequent thereon. Thus, in the last place, should we do all things in the name of *Jesus* (upon all occasions praying to him, or which is all one, to God in his name) which that we may do, (that we are allowed and encouraged to do it) is also a privilege, and an advantage unvaluable.

In so many ways and particular respects may we, and ought we to perform all we do in the name of *Jesus*: We should do every thing out of grateful affection and respect to him, as our chief Principle; every thing as his servants, aiming especially at the pleasing of him and promoting his honour, as our principal end; every thing according to his will and commandment, as our constant rule; every thing after his example, as our best pattern; every thing, in confidence of his gracious assistance and blessing, as our only strength and support; every thing with hope of acceptance purely upon his account; every thing with thankful sense and acknowledgement to God for the mercies and favours conveyed unto us by his means, conferred upon us for his sake; every thing with humble invocation of him, or with prayer to God in his name: In sum, every thing with a due and proper regard had to him; so that he be not passed over or left out in any thing we undertake; but come always into consideration, according as our relations to him, and our obligations to him do require. In the performances of which duties the life indeed of our religion (of all our good practice, of all our devotion) doth consist.

To all this I shall only subjoin the mention of one general duty, implied in all and each of those we have propounded, which is this;

VIII. That our Lord *Jesus* should be frequently (and in a manner continually; always, as to the habitual disposition of our souls, actually upon all fit occasions) present to our minds and thoughts. This, I say, is plainly implied in the former duties. For, how is it possible we should perform all our actions (yea, utter all our words) with any sort of regard to him, if we seldom

think of him? Such is the nimbleness and activity of our minds, that it is feasible enough to do thus; and, in respect to other objects, we commonly experience it done; for *animus est ubi amat*; whatever we affect, our mind, however otherwise employed, will be thinking on it; 'tis hard to restrain our thoughts from it; (the covetous man's heart will be among his bags; the voluptuous man's mind will be in his dishes; the studious Person will be musing on his notions, do he what he can.) Why then may we not as well, as often direct our minds toward our Lord, and mix the remembrance of him with all other employments or entertainments of our thoughts? to do so is surely very requisite, and very expedient toward our good practice. Things far distant, or long absent, can have small efficacy, or influence; 'tis so we see in natural, and 'tis no less so in moral causalities; wherein representation to the fancy and memory have a force answerable to that, which real conjunction and approximation have in nature. As the heat and light of the Sun, the farther he goes, and the longer he stays from us, do the more (proportionably) decrease; so according to our less frequently, and less seriously thinking upon any object, our affection and our respect thereto decay. If therefore we desire, according to our duty, to maintain in our hearts such dispositions (due affection and due reverence) toward *Jesus*; if we intend to suit our actions accordingly with due regard to him; we should, in order to those purposes, apply this so necessary and useful mean, of frequently bending our minds toward him; the doing of which in likelihood, will conduce much to the sanctifying our affections, and to the governing our actions in a constant performance of our duty. For we can hardly sure (admitting we do seriously believe him) to be such as we profess to believe him) with any competent attention think of him, but that thought will be apt to restrain us from doing ill, to incite us to do well; since together with that thought, some of his excellent Perfections, some of our principal relations, and some of our great obligations to him (each of which hath much virtue and force to those purposes) will interpose and represent themselves. Frequently thinking of him, we shall sometimes apprehend him with incessant toil, labouring in the service of God, and in promoting the welfare of men; sometime we shall imagine him undergoing all kind of contumelies and bitter pains; suffering by the cruel hands and tongues of spiteful men; we shall (as it were) behold him *bleeding under the scourge, and hanging upon the cross for our sakes*. Sometimes he will appear to our minds crowned with Majesty; reigning in Sovereign Power and Glory, having all things in subjection under his feet; sometimes also he will be represented as our Judge, before whose tribunal we must all shortly stand, and be obliged to render an account of all our doings; which thoughts passing through our minds, will be apt to make some impression upon our hearts, to have some influence upon our actions. For, can that most amiable and most venerable *Idea* of a Person so entirely pure and holy, so meek and humble, so full of benignity and charity to all men (particularly towards our selves) be otherwise than apt to forge some especial love and reverence toward him; than incline us strongly to do well, yea than teach us what and how we should do so, in conformity to such a Pattern set before us? it occurring to our thoughts, that he is our Lord and Master (who made us and maintains us, who purchased us to himself, and redeemed us from miserable slavery by his own heart-blood) how can it fail to raise in us some awe, some sense of duty toward him? Will not the apprehension of what he did and what he suffered for us powerfully mind us, that according to all justice and equity, in all ingenuity and gratitude we are bound to do only that which will please him? If we think of *Jesus*, when we are setting upon any action, shall we not thereupon be apt thus to interrogate our selves? Shall I do otherwise than he did, or would have done, so rendring my self unlike, or contrary to him? Shall I be so unfaithful to my glorious Master, as to disserve him, or to neglect his service? Shall I be so unworthy toward my gracious Redeemer, my best Friend, my most bountiful Benefactor, as to disoblige him, to wrong him, to dishonour him, to grieve him by thus doing? Shall I be so vain and rash as to cross him who is my King, able to controll and subdue me; as to offend him who is my Judge, resolved to condemn and punish me? Shall I willfully forfeit that friendship and favour of his,

upon

upon which all my happiness doth depend? Shall I procure his displeasure and enmity, from which my utter ruin must inevitably follow? Such considerations have a natural connexion with our frequent thinking upon, and the Presence (as it were) of our Blessed Saviour to our minds, which therefore may be commended to us as an excellent instrument of bettering our hearts and our lives.

To conclude; Let us all always remember, and consider, that we are Christians related unto *Christ Jesus*, and called by his name, and as so, in his name, let us do all things.

Lord of all power and might; who art the Author and giver of all good things; graft in our hearts the love of thy name; increase in us true religion; nourish us with all goodness; and of thy great mercy keep us in the same; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

S E R M O N II.

Of being Imitatours of Christ.

I C O R. iv. 16.

I beseech you be followers of me: or, I exhort you be imitators of me.

Παροικαὶ
ὅπως μιμη-
ταὶ ὑμῶν γίνε-
σθε.

SAINT *Paul* by an impartial reflection upon his heart and life being well assured, that he by the divine Spirit was enlightened with a certain knowledge of all necessary truth, and endued with plentiful measures of divine grace; being conscious of a sincere zeal in himself to honour God and benefit men; being satisfied, that with integrity he did suit his conversation to the dictates of a good conscience, to the sure rule of God's Law, and to the perfect example of his Lord; that his intentions were pure and right; his actions warrantable, and the tenour of his life conspicuously blameless, doth, upon all occasions (not out of any self-conceitedness, arrogance, or ostentation, from which he, by frequent acknowledgement of his own defects and his miscarriages, and by ascribing all the good he had, or did, to the grace and mercy of God, doth sufficiently clear himself; but from an earnest desire to glorify God, and edifie his disciples) describe, and set forth his own Practice, proposing it as a Rule, pressing it upon them as an argument, an encouragement, an obligation to the performance of several duties. So by it he directeth and urgeth the *Ephesians* to a charitable compliance, or complaisance; a sweet and inoffensive demeanour toward other: *Given no offence* (saith he) *neither to the Jews nor to the Gentiles, nor to the Church of God; even as I please all men in all things, not seeking my own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved; be ye followers of me:* so he guides and provokes the *Philippians* to endeavours of proficiency in grace, and the study of Christian Perfection: *Nevertheless* (saith he to them) *whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing: brethren, be followers together with me, and mark such as walk so, as ye have us for an example.* By the like instance and argument, he moveth the *Thessalonians* to a sober and orderly conversation, to industry in their calling, to self-denial, and a generous disregard of private interest: *For your selves* (saith he) *know how ye ought to follow us; for we behaved not our selves disorderly among you; neither did we eat any man's bread for nought, but wrought with labours and travail day and night,*

i Cor. 4. 32,
&c. 10. 1.

Phil. 3. 16, 17.

2 Theff. 3. 7.

night, that we might not be chargeable to any of you; not because we have not power, but to make our selves an example to you to follow us: The same Persons he commendeth, as having by this means been induced to a patient constancy in faith and good works: *Ye know* (saith he) *what manner of men we were among you for your sake, and ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction:* The practice of all virtue and goodness, he also thus recommendeth under this rule and obligation: *Those things, which ye have learned and received, and heard, and seen in me, do, and the God of Peace shall be with you.* Thus in our Text, (referring it to the context) he urgeth the Christians, his disciples at *Corinth* to fidelity and diligence in the charges and affairs committed to them, to humility, patience and charity; wherein he declareth himself to have set before them an evident and exact Pattern. Which Practice of Saint *Paul* doth chiefly teach us two things; That we be careful to give; and that we be ready to follow good example: the latter of which duties more directly and immediately agreeth to the intent of this place; and it therefore I shall only now insist upon: the subject and scope of my discourse shall be to shew, that it is our duty and concernment to regard the Practices of good men, and to follow their example. To which purpose we may observe,

I. That it is the manner of the *Apostles*, upon all occasions, to inculcate this duty: we heard St. *Paul*: hear St. *James*: *Take* (saith he) *my brethren, the Prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord for an example of suffering affliction: Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful and of tender mercy;* and the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews*: *We desire* (saith he) *that every one of you do shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end; that ye be not slothful, but followers of them, who through faith and patience inherit the promises:* and again; *Wherefore seeing we are also compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us; and let us run with patience the race that is set before us.* And St. *Peter*: *Ye wives be in subjection to your own husbands; even as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him Lord.* And wherever the eminent deeds of holy men are mentioned, it is done with an intimation at least, or tacite supposition, that we are obliged to follow their example.

II. We may consider that to this end (that we might have worthy Patterns to imitate) the goodness of God hath raised up in all ages such excellent Persons, furnishing them with rare endowments, and with continual influences of his grace assisting them, to this purpose, that they might not only instruct us with wholesom doctrine, but lead us also by good example in the Paths of righteousness. For certainly what St. *Paul* saith concerning the sins and punishments of bad men, is no less applicable to the virtuous deeds and happy examples of good men: *All these things happened unto them for ensamples, and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.*

III. They are written for our admonition; It was a special design of God's Providence in recording and recommending to our regard the divine histories: They were not framed as monuments of a fruitless memory and fame to them; they were not proposed to us as entertainments of our curiosity, as objects of wonder, as matters of idle discourse; that unconcernedly we should gaze upon them, or talk about them; as Children look on fine Gays; but they are set before us, as copies to transcribe; as lights to

guide us in our way to happiness: So that if we will not ingratfully frustrate the intentions of Divine Providence for our good, we must dispose our selves to imitate those illustrious Patterns of Virtue and Piety.

IV. We may farther consider that in the nature of the thing it self good example is of singular advantage to us, as being apt to have a mighty virtue, efficacy and influence upon our practice: which consideration should much ingage us to regard it, applying it as an instrument of making our selves good, and consequently of becoming happy. Good example is, as I say, of exceeding advantage to practice upon many accounts.

Μεγίστη δὲ ὁδὸς πρὸς τὴν τῆς καθήκον-
τος εὐρεσιν καὶ ἡ μελέτη τῶν δεισιπνεύων
γροφῶν ἐν ταύταις ᾗ καὶ αἱ τῶν προφ-
ετῶν ἐπαθήκαι ἐνρίσκοῦσαι, καὶ οἱ βί-
οι τῶν μακαρίων ἀνδρῶν ἀνάγεται
παράδειμοι οἷον εἰκόνες τινὲς ἐμ-
χοὶ τῇ κατὰ θεὸν πολιτείᾳ, τῇ μιμή-
ματι τῶν ἀγαθῶν ἔργων περικενταί-
Baf. ad Greg. Ep. 2.

1. Examples do more compendiously, easily and pleasantly inform our minds, and direct our practice, than precepts or any other way or instrument of discipline. Precepts are delivered in an universal and abstracted manner, naked, and void of all circumstantial attire, without any intervention, assistance, or suffrage of sense; and consequently can have no vehement operation upon the fancy, and soon do fly the memory; like flashes of lightening, too subtle to make any great impression, or to leave any remarkable footsteps, upon what they encounter; they must be expressed in nice terms, and digested in exact method; they are various; and in many disjointed pieces conspire to make up an entire body of direction; they do also admit of divers cases, and require many exceptions, or restrictions which to apprehend distinctly, and retain long in memory, needs a tedious labour, and continual attention of mind, together with a piercing and steady judgment: But good example with less trouble, more speed, and greater efficacy causes us to comprehend the business, representing it like a Picture exposed to sense, having the Parts orderly disposed, and completely united, suitably cloathed and dressed up in its circumstances; contained in a narrow compass, and perceptible by one glance, so easily insinuating it self into the fancy, and durably resting therein: In it you see at once described the thing done, the quality of the actor, the manner of doing, the minute seasons, measures and adjuncts of the action; with all which you might not perhaps by numerous rules be acquainted; and this is the most facile, familiar and delightful way of instruction, which is by experience, history and observation of sensible events. A Systeme of Precepts, though exquisitely compacted, is in comparison but a *Skeleton*, a dry, meagre, lifeless bulk, exhibiting nothing of person, place, time, manner, degree, wherein chiefly the flesh and blood, the colours and graces, the life and soul of things do consist; whereby they please, affect, and move us: But example imparts thereto a goodly corpulency, a life, a motion, renders it conspicuous, specious and active, transforming its notional universality into the reality of singular subsistence. This discourse is verified by various experience; for we find all Masters of Art and Science explicating, illustrating and confirming their general Rules and Precepts by particular examples: *Mathematicians* demonstrate their *Theorems* by *Schemes* and *Diagrams*, which in effect are but sensible instances; *Oratours* back their *Enthymemes* (or rational Argumentations) with *Inductions* (or singular Examples;) *Philosophers* alledge the Practice of *Socrates*, *Zeno*, and the like Persons of famous Wisdom and Virtue to authorize their doctrine: *Politicks* and civil Prudence is more easily and sweetly drawn out of good history, than out of Books *de Republica*. *Artificers* describe *Models*, and set Paterns before their Disciples, with greater success, than if they should deliver accurate Rules and Precepts to them: For who would not more readily learn to build by viewing carefully the Parts and Frame of a well contrived structure, than by a studious enquiry into the rules of *Architecture*; or to *draw* by setting a good Picture before him, than by merely speculating upon the laws of *Perspective*; or to write fairly and expeditely by imitating one good copy, than by hearkening to a thousand oral Prescriptions; the understanding of which, and faculty of applying them to practice, may prove more difficult, and tedious, than the whole practice it self as directed by a copy? Neither is the case much different in Moral concernments; one good example may represent more fully, and clearly to us the nature of a virtue, than any verbose description thereof can do: in sooner time, and with greater ease we may learn our duty by regarding the deportment of some excellent Person, than by attending to many Philosophical discourses concerning it: for instance, if we desire to know what Faith is, and how we should rely upon the Divine Providence, let us propose to our consideration the practice of *Abraham*; wherein we may see the Father of the Faithful leaving a most pleasant country, the place of his nativity, and questionless most dear unto him under that notion; deserting his home and fixed habitation, his estate and patrimony; his kindred

Xen. Apomn. 4.

It was Xenoph. observation, grounded upon his own Experience that the memory of Socrates's Conversation did greatly profit his Acquaintance (τὸ μεμνησθαι μὴ παρὸν τοῦ Σωκράτους ὡφέλεια τὰς ἐπιστάτας αὐτοῦ συνέβαινεν) and Seneca saith, that the Crowd of Philosophers, which followed the same Wise-man derived more of their Ethics from his manners than his words (plus ex moribus, quam ex verbis Socratis traxit) Sen. Eph. 11. And he that shall reflect upon the Story concerning his behaviour, when he was by malicious envy persecuted to death, may perhaps be more edified thereby, than by all his subtle discourses about death, and the Souls state after it.

and acquaintance, to wander he knew not where in unknown Lands, with all his Family, leading an uncertain and ambulatory life in Tents, sojourning and shifting among strange People, devoid of Piety and Civility (among *Canaanites* and *Egyptians*) upon a bare confidence in the Divine Protection and Guidance: we may see him Aged 99 years, sensible of his own natural impotence, and an equal incapacity in his Consort as to such purposes, yet with a steady belief assuring himself, that from those dead stocks a numerous Progeny should spring, and that he who by all Power of Nature was unable to beget one Child, should by virtue of God's Omnipotent Word become the Father of a mighty Nation: We may see him upon the first summons of the Divine Command without scruple or hesitancy, readily and chearfully yielding up his only Son (the sole ground of his hope and prop of his Family, to whose very Person the promise of multiplication was affixed) to be sacrificed and slain; not objecting to his own reason the palpable inconsistency of counsels so repugnant; nor anxiously labouring to reconcile the seeming contrariety between the Divine Promises and Commands; but resolved as it were (with an implicit Faith in God) to believe things incredible, and to rely upon events impossible; contemplating these things let us say what Discourse could so lively describe the nature of true Faith, as this illustrious Precedent doth.

Again, he that would learn how to demean himself in resisting the assaults of temptation, let him consider that one carriage of *Joseph*; of him, together withstanding the courtships of an attractive beauty, and rejecting the solicitations of an imperious Mistress, advantaged by opportunities of privacy and solitude; when the refusal was attended with extream danger, and all the mischiefs which the disdain of a furious lust disappointed, of an outrageous jealousy provoked, of a loving Master's confidence abused, could produce; and all this by one of meanest condition in a strange Place, where no intercession, favour, or patronage of friends could be had, no equal examination of his cause might be expected; of him doing this, merely upon Principles of Conscience, and out of fear of God; (saying, *How can I do this great evil and sin against God?*) and he that considers this example, how can he be ignorant of his duty in the like case?

Again, would we learn wisdom, constancy and resolution in the conduct of honest, and worthy designs, let us set before our eyes the Pattern of *Moses*; and therein take notice, how he obeying divine instinct and direction, having embraced that noble Purpose of rescuing his Countrymen from the *Egyptian* Bondage, of settling them in a method of happy Policy, and in bringing them into the promised Land of their enjoyment, did behave himself in the execution thereof; with how indefatigable industry he solicited their cause with a fickle, and deceitful, stupid, and hard-hearted King; enduring frequent disappointments and repulses, together with furious storms of anger, and most terrible menaces from him: how having there surmounted all obstacles, and effectually enlarged the People from their restraint in *Egypt*, he led them on foot through a valley, encompassed with mountains of Sea; and after that, undertook a tedious march (a march of 40 Years) through a wild, barren, and dry solitude, (where no water was, but such as issued from the stony bowels of a rock; no food or means of subsistence, but such as was supplied by the miraculous purveyance of Heaven) in the mean while, resisting the continual invasions of open enemies, in great numbers with armed violence striving to obstruct his passage, and defeat his purpose; having also (which was more) his Patience constantly exercised in supporting the froward perverseness of a most incredulous, and intractable People, which took all occasions of complaint and mutiny against him; in contesting with the factious rivalry of envious Nobles, who repined at his successes, and maligned his authority among them; in bearing the indiscreet and untoward prevarications of his own most intimate friends and nearest relations, complying with the wicked humours and desires of the People; in sustaining many other Perplexities and Crosses; all which notwithstanding he with insuperable resolution happily atchieved his glorious undertaking; and will not this example, attentively regarded, beyond the power of any other means or method, explain to us the way of industry, courage and perseverance in good and worthy, though high and difficult enterprises?

One instance more, and that of all most pertinent to our occasion, Would you be instructed, how faithfully to discharge the ministerial, or any other office? With a steadfast attention then behold the excellent Pattern of *St. Paul*; consider how in all his designs he zealously and singly aimed at the honour and service of God, neglecting his own safety, quiet, credit, and all worldly accommodations for the advancement of them. How affectionately he tendered the good and welfare of those, the care of whose spiritual condition was commended to him, using all his skill, care and strength in promoting their edification; declaring himself for their good to be content, not only for a time to be absent from the Lord, being deprived of that happiness which he otherwise impatiently groaned for, and was fully assured of; but desirous, as it seems, to be secluded for ever from his blissful presence by a dreadful *Anathema*, for their sake. How prudently, meekly and humbly he demeaned himself toward them; becoming all things to all men, forming himself into all allowable shapes and colours; undergoing all sorts of censure and imputations (of a despicable, an ignorant, a foolish Person) tempering his speech and deportment to their capacities and needs, bearing their miscarriages, and complying with their weaknesses; parting freely with his own just liberty, pleasure and satisfaction, for their spiritual advantage. How generously he despised his own profit and ease, refusing that supply he might with all reason and equity have required from them; chusing to maintain himself with the labour of his own hands, and the sweat of his brows, that he might render the Gospel no-wise burdensome, or offensive to them. How vigilantly and courageously he withstood the mischievous endeavours of false Brethren, and treacherous Seducers; earnestly contending for the Churches peace and quiet against factious spirits, and for the substantial truths of the Gospel against the pernicious devices of Hereticks and false Teachers. How patiently he sustained all manner of Pains, Grievs, Travels, Wants, Losses, Hazards, Distresses, Disappointments, Affronts and Reproaches for the Honour of God, the benefit of his spiritual Children, the discharge of his Duty, and satisfaction of his Conscience: These things, I say, regard, and then tell me, if he might not reasonably inculcate this admonition, *Imitate me*; and if his example be not of rare use to instruct us, how faithfully we should in our respective charges and employments demean ourselves. I might in like manner instance how excellent a rule of Devotion the practice of the Royal Prophet may be unto us; how *Elias* his practice might teach us to be zealous Champions for truth and righteousness; how they who would be good Judges, or honest Patriots may receive direction from the carriage of *Samuel*, *Daniel* and *Nehemiah*. But I proceed to say that farther,

II. Good Examples do not only inform; but they perswade and incline our reason to good practice, commending it to us by plausible authority: a way of reasoning the most plain, easie and suitable to all mens capacities; less subject to error and doubt, than any other in particular cases; whereby as it is always more easie to know what is good and fit, so commonly it is most safe: there being few who can so well discern what is good, as they may rest in the judgments of others. For that wise and virtuous Persons do any thing, is a very probable argument, that we are obliged, and concerned to do the like; seeing such Persons may in all their actions be supposed to have an unbiassed regard to the rules of truth and justice. He therefore who can say, that *Abraham*, or *David*, or *St. Paul*, did so in such a case, supposeth that he hath no small reason to do the like; it is accounted pardonable, yea almost commendable, to err with such Persons; because it is done with good appearance of reason, seeing such Persons were themselves unlikely to err: *Will you* (saith *Cicero*) *commemorate to me Scipio's, and Cato's, and Lælius's, and say they did the same thing; though the thing displeases me, yet I cannot withstand the authority of such men: Their authority is so great, that it can cover even the suspicion of a fault.* 'Tis obvious in temporal concerns, how great a stroke this way of discourse hath; how boldly men adventure their dearest interests in following such, whom they probably deem honest, and able to guide them: For Instance, in travelling, if one being ignorant

Africanos mihi, & Catones, & Lelios commemorabis. & eos fecisse idem dices, quamvis res mihi non placeant, tamen contra hominum auctoritatem probare non posuero. Magna est hominum auctoritas, & etiam tanta, ut delicti suspicionem tegere possit. Cic. in Verr. 3.

*ἡ τοιοῦτος ἐν
διδασκαλίᾳ
δεινός ἐστι
μακάριος ἰσχυρὸς
ἐν ἀνεξικακίᾳ
ὁ πρὸς
Μωσέως, ἀρχὴ
ἐστὶν ὁ πρὸς
Δαβὶδ, &c.
Chrys. T. V.
p. 656.*

rant or doubtful of his way happen to meet a Person, whom he conceives able, and no-wise concerned, or disposed to mis-lead him, he without scruple follows him, and confidently relies on his direction: In like manner, all good men in the way of virtuous practice tending directly toward happiness (our common journey's end;) it being their design, their interest, and their endeavour not to mistake the way, not to defect from the right and nearest course thereto, men are apt to think it reasonable, and safe to accompany, in their Progress, or to Press after them in their steps: and surely, next to a clear, and certain rule, there is not any more rational warrant for Practice, and consequently no better inducement thereto, than such good Precedents. Farther,

III. Examples do incite our Passions, and impel them to the performance of duty. They raise hope, they enflame courage, they provoke emulation, they urge upon modesty, they awaken curiosity, they affect fancy; they set in motion all the springs of Activity. It may not be amiss to shew how, particularly,

I. They raise hope, by discovering to us and assuredly proving the feasibility of matters propounded, or the possibility of success in undertaking good designs, and that by the best and most convincing of arguments, experience. Nothing so depresseth hope, and advanceth despondency as an apprehension of impossibility, or which is equivalent thereto, an extream difficulty (appearing to surmount our present forces) in the reasonable consequence. For τῶν ἀδυνάτων ἐπιδῶν μανικόν, 'tis a madness to aim at impossibilities; and such considering the great infirmity of humane nature, its strong propensions to evil, and averseness from good, together with the manifold impediments, and allurements objecting themselves in the way of good practice, all duties as barely represented in Precepts, and pressed by rational inducements might seem to be, if good example did not clearly demonstrate them to be possible, yea sometimes facile; even those, which upon a superficial view do seem most difficult, and insuperable by our weak endeavour. The Stoical Doctrine, which described a fine and stately Portraiture of virtue; and inculcated very strict rules (a close following of God and nature, a perfect victory over self, the subduing all Passions and over-ruling all corporeal Appetites; an entire freedom, composure and tranquillity of Mind; a total indifferency in respect of Fortune, and all external events, with the like duties, rarely practised, although upon all accounts acknowledged conformable to reason) was therefore by most rejected as useless, or exploded as ridiculous, as being presumed to propound matters purely imaginary and unpracticable: yet he that hath seen this doctrine in great measure exemplified by Zeno, the first Master of it, would have had no such reason to condemn it, nor to despair of practising according to it, if he would seriously endeavour it: exemplified, I say, by Zeno, whereof we have an illustrious testimony from a solemn decree of the Athenians: ἐπεὶ δὲ Ζένων Μνασέως, &c. Laert. in Zen. Whereas Zeno the Son of Mnaseas the Cittican, having many years professed Philosophy in this City, and as well in all other things hath demeaned himself like a good man, as particularly exhorting the young men, who went to be instructed by him, hath provoked them to virtue, and sobriety; without exhibiting his own life a pattern of the best things answerable to the discourses he used to make; it is therefore auspiciously decreed by the people, that Zeno the Son of Mnaseas be solemnly praised and crowned (according to the usage) with a golden crown; and that a monument be erected for him at the publick charge in the Ceramicum (the Place where those were interr'd, who had bravely exposed their lives for publick defence.) This was indeed a noble attestation, and a comely respect exhibited to a virtuous Conversation: making in some measure a satisfaction for the heinous affront done thereto, when instead of honouring it with a Crown, they rewarded it with a cup of Poison, given to the excellent Socrates. Suitably to which testimony Seneca saith of Cleanthes, that his virtuous Practice depended more upon the observation of Zeno's life, than the information of his doctrine. Zenonem Cleanthes non expressisset si eum tantummodo audisset; vita ejus interfuit, secreta perspexit, observavit illum an ex formula sua viveret. Cleanthes (saith he) had not so nearly resembled Zeno, if he had only attended to his discourses: he was present to his life, he took notice of

of his private carriage, he observed whether his practice did suit to his Doctrine. So that *Stoicism* it self which speaketh such Prodigies, was it seems founded not only upon big words, the issues of a speculative fancy, but more upon the good Practice of its first Master and Institutor. And indeed he that would effectually perswade the undertaking of any enterprize, must either suppose it, or prove it effectible; and the most easie, the most evident way of proving it is by Example. Men (saith *Pliny Junior* well) are better instructed by examples, which have in them chiefly this advantage, that they do prove the things may be done which they enjoyn. And, *Humane infirmity* (saith *Salvian* to the same purpose) requires the assistance of example, that it may more easily now perform that, which it knows others to have before done; all posterity being admonished by hearing that what hath once been done, may be done again; And, *The Example* (saith *St. Bernard*) of a work done is a lively and efficacious Oration, easily perswading what we intend, by proving that feasible, which we strive to perswade unto. Upon which score we therefore are exceedingly obliged to those holy men who by their Practice have assured us, that the highest duties exacted of us by our religion (the mortification of unreasonable desires, the suppression of irregular passions; the loving and blessing our Enemies; the renouncing worldly vanities and pleasures, the rejoycing in afflictions, the voluntary abdication of our estates in some cases, yea, exposing life it self to inevitable hazard and loss) are not chimerical Propositions of impossible Performances; but duties (if we shall seriously and vigorously apply our endeavours to them, and suffer our hopes to be elevated by their example) really practicable: Piety abstractedly view'd in Precept may seem an airy Project, a Name, a Notion; but it being seen in Example will prove a matter substantial, true and feasible. A direct and pure speculation thereof may dazle our sight, and dash our hopes; but as being reflected from Persons practising it we may bear its lustre, and hope to attain it.

2. Examples do enflame courage. So the Apostle to the *Hebrews* signifieth, when to this purpose he intimateth that he mentioned and set forth before them the examples of the *Patriarchs*; that he thereby might excite their courage, and cause them resolutely to undertake that obedience, and patiently to undergo those afflictions, which they performed and sustained; that (saith he) ye be not slothful, but followers of them, who through faith and patience inherit the promises. For that heat, and active Spirit, which in some degree resideth in all mens breasts, is by example kindled, as one flame is kindled by the contact, or approach of another. How many Persons timorous, and averse from dangerous undertakings, have notwithstanding become very bold and adventurous in war by the discipline and influence of an exemplary valour? 'Tis *Plutarch's* observation concerning *Cesar's* Souldiers, that they who in service under other Commanders did not exceed the ordinary rate of courage, nor excel their fellows, did yet when he lead them become irresistibly valiant, being animated and inspired by his unparalleled Gallantry; and who is there indeed so incurably heartless, so desperately sluggish or stupid, whom the sight of a valiant Leader, marching before into the mouth of danger, will not infuse fire and vigour into, and intigate forward into a participation of brave adventure? So example doth by a kind of contagion insinuate courage, or inveagle men therinto; beside that it is a kind of daring, and proclaimeth him a Dastard that will not imitate it; which imputation the lowest courage of Man can hardly digest; and will therefore by doing somewhat answerable strive to decline it.

3. Again, Examples provoke emulation; which is another strong Principle of activity; moving us earnestly to desire, (and thence eagerly to pursue) whatever good, privilege, or advantage we see another to enjoy. To observe another of the same nature and capacities with our selves to have shone with an illustrious virtue, to be consecrated to Posterity by a lasting fame, and to

Melius homines exemplis docentur quā imprimis hoc omni habent quæ approbant, quæ præcipi fieri posse. *Pam. Jun. Paneg.*

Admirari se exempli expiat humana infirmitas, quæ facilius ipsa nunc faciat, quæ alios fecisse ante cognoscit, dum admonetur auditu atas omnis fieri posse, quod factum est. *Salv. ad Eccl. Cath.*

Sermo quidam virum et efficax exemplum operis est, facile persuadens quod indubium, dum factibile probat esse quod suademus. *Bern. de Resur. Serm. 3.*

Ex aliorum factis fieri posse credunt, quod forte cum putant fieri non posse pigrescunt. *Cyp. Ep. l. 2. 2.*

Fortis in armis
Cæsareis Labienus erat.

Chrys. T. 1. p. 77. T. 6. p. 148.
T. 5. Orat. 101.
Φύσει γὰρ φιλόκαλον ἔσαν τὴν φύσιν
τῶν ἀνδρῶν εἰδὼς ὁ Κῦρος, &c.

be crowned with glorious rewards above; what other reflections of thought can it produce in us, than such as these? shall he a man, like my self, endued with the same faculties, appetites and passions; subject to the same infirmities, temptations, needs, cares and encumbrances of life, shall he by noble dispositions of Soul, and worthy Performances render himself highly considerable; while I by sordid qualities, and unworthy Practices debase, and render my self despicable? shall he leave behind him monuments of eternal Praise, while I do nothing worthy of regard or memory? shall he enjoy the favour of the great God, and the comforts of a blessed Eternity, but I be wholly deprived of that joyful Estate, and plunged into endless sorrows, and desperate misery? shall a *Joseph* stoutly resist and overcome the strongest Temptations, and I be easily baffled by the least solicitation of Vice? shall a stripling *David* gloriously triumph over Giants, while I basely am vanquished by Dwarfs? shall *Job* be tripped of all his Goods with contentedness, and endure the most grievous Pains with Patience, while I am discomposed for any small loss, and dismayed by the least cross accident? shall *Abraham* here by his faith, and obedience attain to be called the Friend of God, and rest for ever in his glorious and happy Bosom, while I deservedly am refused the honour and comfort of that heavenly communion here, and shall hereafter be cast out from that blissful Presence into the dismal mansions of wretched folly and wickedness? Did *Paul*, once a stubborn Jew, a blind Pharisee, a grievous Blasphemer, a bloody Persecutor, by a seasonable Conversion repair his State, approve himself to God by an eminent zeal for his Glory, undergo restless Pains, run desperate hazards, and endure all sorts of distresses for the propagation of God's Heavenly truth, obtaining thence a never-fading crown of Glory in Heaven, and a perpetual renown up in Earth; and shall I then, who from my youth have been educated in the most true and holy religion, who have by solemn engagements devoted my self thereto; who may without any trouble, or danger profess and practise according to that holy discipline, proceed in wicked courses, provoking God's wrath, and attracting his vengeance upon me? No: since the capacities are alike, since the means are common, since the rewards of Piety are promiscuously exposed and offered unto all, why should I by deplorable perverseness or negligence suffer my self to be deprived of it and its benefits? Why shall not I become as good, as commendable, as happy as any other man? These are the conceits and voices of natural emulation, that mighty Passion (so often and by many effects it discovereth it self to be) implanted in our original constitution to be as a spur and incentive, stimulating and enflaming us unto the ready undertaking, and vigorous pursuit of good purposes; the which perhaps hath produced more noble effects, than any other Passion, or Inclination of our Souls: for all manner of excellency in knowledge, in prowess, in virtue how often doth it issue from this source? Doth not the admired fame of men notable for Learning (recorded in Story, or subject to present observation) and a jealousy of being surpassed in accomplishments competent to humane nature, sharpen the appetite, and rouse the industry of most Scholars, whom neither the love of know-

*Tentanda via est, quæne quoque possim
Tollere humo.*

ledge, nor its apparent usefulness could any-wise persuade to bear so much toil in acquist thereof? Do not all Histories acquaint us, that the most gallant enterprizes and exploits of

famous Warriours have derived their beginning from an emulation of the glory purchased by their Ancestours? (wisdom and valour have thus especially been propagated; one Man's signal excellency being Parent to the like in many other.) And that this Passion may in like manner be subservient to the Production of Virtue and Piety, is plain enough from parity of reason, and from experience; and we have (for farther argument thereof) the *Apostles* Practice using it to this purpose: St. *Paul* employed it as an engine for the conversion of his dear countrymen; whom by raising in them a jealousy of being outstripped (in God's favour, and its effects) by the *Gentiles*, he endeavoureth to provoke to the embracing of the Christian Faith: *I speak to you Gentiles* (saith he) *in as much as I am the Apostle of the Gentiles, I magnifie my Office,* ἐν ὧς ὡς ἀγγέλω με τιμώ σάρα, *if by any means I may provoke to emulation them which are my flesh, and might save some of them.* And St. *James* instigateth us unto

Rom. 11. 14.
19. 19.

fer-

fervency of Prayer, by minding us, that *Elias was a Man of like passions with* Jam. 5. 17. *our selves*; yet was able by his Prayers to shut and open Heaven, to procure barrenness and fertility to the Earth. And the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews* chargeth us, to *consider one another*, *εις παραξυσμὸν ἀγάπης, ἢ καλῶν ἔργων*. so as to *provoke one another* (or by mutual emulation to sharpen one another) *to charity and good works*.

4. Examples do work upon modesty, that *preserver and guardian of virtue*, as *Cicero* calls it. For every good Action of another doth upbraid, reproach and shame him, who acteth not conformably thereto. Can we without a trembling heart, and blushing forehead view the Practices of the ancient Saints, if ours be altogether unlike them? If they to please God, and secure their salvation did undergo such *prodigious* Pains in assiduous devotions, abstinencies, watchings, and we contrary-wise are extremely sluggish, cold and negligent in the Performance of our ordinary duties; if they willingly renounced all sensual complacencies, and we either cherish our selves in a soft delicacy of life, or wallow in a profane dissolution of manners; if they to free themselves from distracting cares, voluntarily disburthened themselves of all needless encumbrances, and we are wholly busie in *heaping up* wealth, and driving on worldly interests; if they gladly embraced and endured the sharpest Afflictions, and we are terrified by the thought, are overwhelmed by the sense of the least disappointment, or distastful occurrence; how can we without extream regret of mind, and confusion of face consider their Practice, or compare it with ours? It is a profligate impudence of him that can daily hear, and read the Stories of their doings, without being deeply sensible, and ashamed at the dissonance appearing between their course of life, and his.

5. Example awakens that curiosity, which is natural to us, and of no mean efficacy upon our Actions. For whatever we see done, we are apt to be inquisitive concerning it; why and to what purpose it is done, what the grounds are, and what the fruits of the Performance; especially if the matter seem considerably important, and the action proceedeth from a Person deserving respect; whereof having passed some competent judgment, we are by the same instinct of curiosity farther transported into a desire of discerning by our trial and experience whether the event corresponderh to our expectation; so are we easily induced to imitate the actions of others. By which means as vice ordinarily is conceived and propagated, (men by a preposterous and perverse curiosity being inveagled to try what they see others affect or enjoy) so may virtue also by the same means be engendred and nourished; the general ways of producing and maintaining those contrary habits being alike. As therefore, 'tis a great blemish and reproach to humane nature, that,

— *Faciles imitandis*
Turpibus & pravis omnes sumus —

Juven.

we (as the *Satyrists* truly observeth of us) have a great proclivity to follow naughty examples; so there is from hence some amends, that we have also some inclination to imitate good and worthy Precedents; the which is somewhat more strong and vigorous, because countenanced and encouraged by the approbation of reason, our most noble faculty.

6. Examples also do please the mind and fancy in contemplation of them, thence drawing a considerable influence upon practice. No kind of studious entertainment doth so generally delight as History; or the tradition of remarkable examples: even those who have an abhorrency or indisposition toward other studies (who have no *genius* to apprehend the more intricate subtilties of Science; nor the patience to pursue rational consequences) are yet often much taken with historical narrations; these striking them with a delectable variety of accidents, with circumstantial descriptions, and sensible representations of objects, do greatly affect and delight their fancies; especially the relation of notable adventures, and rare accidents, is wont to be attended with great pleasure and satisfaction. And such are those, which present to us the lives and examples of holy men, abounding with wonders of providence and grace: no attempts so gallant, no exploits so illustrious as those, which have been atchiev-

ed by the faith and patience, by the prudence and courage of the ancient Saints; they do far surpass the most famous achievements of *Pagan* Heroes. It was (I dare say) more wonderful, that *Abraham* with his retinue of Household Servants should vanquish four potent and victorious Kings; and that *Gideon* with three hundred unarmed men should discomfit a vastly numerous host; than that *Alexander* with a well appointed army of stout and expert Soldiers should overturn the *Persian* Empire. The Siege of *Jericho* is so far more remarkable, than those most famous ones of *Numantia*, and *Saguntus*, as it is more strange, that the blast of Trumpets, and the noise of People shouting should demolish Walls, than the shaking them with Rams, or discharging massy Stones against them. And he that carefully will compare the deeds of *Sampson* and *Hercules*, shall find, that one true exploit performed by the former doth much in force and strangeness surmount the twelve fabulous labours of the other: No triumphs indeed are comparable to those of Piety; no trophies are so magnificent and durable, as those which victorious faith erecteth: that history therefore which reports the *res gestæ*, the acts and sufferings of most pious men, must in reason be esteemed not only the most useful, but also the most pleasant; yielding the sweetest entertainment to well disposed minds; wherein we see virtue expressed, not in bare *idea* only, but in actual life, strength, motion; in all its beauty and ornaments: than which no spectacle can be more stately; no object more grateful can be presented to the discerning eye of reason.

7. We may farthermore consider, that God hath provided and recommended to us one example, as a perfect standard of good practice, The example of our Lord; the which declareth the use and efficacy of good example, as one principal instrument of Piety. That indeed is the most universal, absolute and assured Pattern; yet doth it not supersede the use of other examples: Not only the valour and conduct of the General, but those of inferiour Officers, yea, the resolution of common Souldiers do serve to animate their fellows: The Stars have their season to guide us, as well as the Sun; especially when our eyes are so weak, as hardly to bear the day. Even, considering our infirmity, inferiour examples, by their imperfection sometime have a peculiar advantage. Our Lord's most imitable practice did proceed from an immense virtue of divine grace, which we cannot arrive to; it in itself is so perfect and high, that we may not ever reach it; looking upon it may therefore sometimes dazzle, and discourage our weakness; but other good men had assistances in measure, such as we may hope to approach unto; they were subject to the difficulties, which we feel; they were exposed to the perils of falling, which we fear: we may therefore hope to march on in a reasonable distance after them; we may, by help of the same grace, come near in transcribing their less exact Copy.

To conclude, Since upon so many accounts we are obliged to follow good examples; since they are of so great use towards our proceeding in the way to happiness; thence they conduce to the clear instruction of our understanding, to the forcibly inclining our reason, to the vehement excitement of our Passions, to the delightfully affecting our imagination in subserviency to good practice; let us make that due and profitable use of them, which we should and may do. Let us with diligent attention perusing the sacred history meditate upon the lives of holy men therein propounded as Patterns of a persevering Faith in God, and conscionable obedience to his commandments. Let the light of their exemplary practice in all kind of piety and virtue continually shine upon our souls, to direct our minds, to inflame our affections, to quicken our resolutions, to detect the errors, and correct the faults of our lives, that we imitating their virtuous and pious conversation, may partake of those comfortable rewards; of that joy, and bliss, whereof they rest possessed: The which God Almighty, and our Blessed Saviour the author and finisher of our Faith, by his gracious aid and blessing grant unto us; to whom be all glory and praise for ever and ever. *Amen.*

S E R M O N III.

Abiding in Christ to be demonstrated by walking as Christ did.

1 JOHN ii. 6.

He that saith he abideth in him, ought himself also so to walk as he walked.

TO abide in Christ, to be in Christ, to put on Christ; and reciprocally *Christ's being in us, living, dwelling, being formed in us*; and the like expressions occurring in H. Scripture, do not denote any Physical inherence, or Essential conjunction between *Christ* and us (such as those who affect unintelligible mysteries rather than plain sense, would conceit) but only that mutual relation accruing from our profession of being *Christ's* Disciples, our being inserted into his body the Church, being governed by his Laws, partaking of his Grace, with all the privileges of the Gospel, relying upon his promises, and hoping for eternal salvation from him. By virtue of which relation we may be said in a mystical, or moral manner to be united to him, deriving strength and sustenance from him, as the members from the head, the branches from the tree, the other parts of the building from the foundation; by which similitudes this mysterious union is usually expressed in Scripture; in effect briefly, to be in, or to abide in *Christ* implyeth no more, but our being truly, in faith and practice, Christians; so that the meaning of St. John's words seemeth plainly and simply to be this; Whoever pretend to be a Christian (that is, to believe the Doctrine, and embrace the Discipline of *Christ*) ought to walk (that is, is obliged to order the whole course of his life and actions) as *Christ* walked (that is, as *Christ* did live and converse in the World:) Or, It is the duty of every one, professing Christianity, to conform his life to the pattern of *Christ's* life, to follow his example, to imitate his practice. This is the importance of the words, this the subject of our present discourse.

Rom. 8. 16.
Gal. 2. 20.
Eph. 3. 17.
Gal. 4. 19.

I. For illustration and confirmation of which point, we may observe, that the H. *Apostles* do, upon all occasions, assume this supposition, when they would persuade their Disciples to the practice of any virtue, or performance of any duty; enforcing their exhortations, by representing the practice of *Christ*, as an unquestionable ground of obligation, and an effectual inducement thereto. Hence they incite them to holiness: *But* (saith St. Peter) *as he that hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation:* to Charity; *And walk in love* (saith St. Paul) *as Christ also loved us:* to Patience; *Because* (saith St. Peter) *Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that we should follow his steps.* And *Let us* (saith the *Apostle* to the Hebrews) *run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross:* to humility; *Let* (saith St. Paul) *the same mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus, who being in the form of God, thought it no robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation:* to charitable compliance, and inoffensive demeanour toward others, intimated by St. Paul, when he says, *Even as I please all men in all things, not seeking my own profit, but the profit of many, that they might be saved;* *Be ye followers of me, as I am of Christ;* and again,

1 Pet. 1. 15.
Eph. 5. 2.
1 Pet. 2. 21.
Heb. 12. 1.
Phil. 2. 2.
1 Cor. 10. 33.
11. 1.

Let

Rom. 15. 2. *Let every one please his neighbour for his good to edification; for even Christ pleased not himself.* Thus do the *Apostles* take all occasion, from the like practice of *Christ*, to perswade the performance of duty; and the strength of their argument lyeth upon the evidence of this supposition, that all professing themselves Christians are especially obliged to imitate *Christ's* example. And their Authority may be backed and enforced by several reasons.

II. Doing so hath a reasonableness and decency grounded upon our relations to *Christ*: it is fit and comely that the manners of the Disciple should be regulated by those of his Master; that the Servant should not, in his garb and demeanour, dissent or vary from his Lord; that the Subject should conform his humour to the fashion of his Prince; especially that we should thus comply and conform to such a Master, such a Lord, such a Prince, whom (upon highest considerations) by a most voluntary choice, and in a most solemn manner we have absolutely devoted our selves unto: This reason our Lord himself doth urge:

Joh. 13. 13. *Ye (saith he to his Disciples) call me Master, and Lord, and ye say well, for so I am; if I then your Lord and Master have washed your feet, ye ought also to wash one anothers feet.*

III. Following *Christ's* example is requisite to demonstrate the sincerity of our faith, love and reverence to him. It is the most natural way of testifying affection and respect to imitate the manners of those persons, who are the objects of those acts and dispositions; to esteem what they approve, to delight in what they affect, and consequently (since actions do proceed from affections) to do as they do. Contrary actions are plain arguments of contrary judgments, inclinations and affections: Who can imagine we sincerely believe in *Christ*, or heartily love him, or truly honour him, that seeth us to loath what he liked, or affect what he detested; to condemn what he prized, or value what he despised; to neglect what he pursued, or embrace what he avoided? but if our lives resemble his, any Man will thence collect our respect and affection to him: this argument our Saviour doth also intimate: *By this (saith he) shall all men know ye are my Disciples, if ye love one another; that is, it will be an evident sign and strong argument, that ye really do believe in, love and honour me, if ye imitate me in my charity.*

Joh. 13. 35.

IV. By pretending to be Christians we acknowledge the transcendent goodness, worth and excellency of our Saviour; that he was incomparably better, and wiser than any person ever was, or could be; that he always acted with the highest reason, out of the most excellent disposition of mind, in order to the best purposes; and that his practice therefore reasonably should be the rule and pattern of ours. For the best and exactest in every kind is the measure of the rest. All that would obtain exquisite skill in any Art, or Faculty, think best to imitate the works of the best Masters therein; A Painter to draw after the pieces of *Zeuxis* or *Apelles* (of *Raphael*, or *Titian*;) an Oratour to speak in the style of *Cicero*, or *Demosthenes*; a Souldier to emulate the military Achievements of *Hannibal*, or *Cæsar*: in like manner, reason requireth, if we would live well and happily, that we should endeavour to conform our practice to that of our Saviour, the most perfect mirror of all virtue and goodness.

V. The practice of our Saviour did thoroughly agree with his Doctrine and Law; he requireth nothing of us which he did not eminently perform himself.

He fulfilled in deed as well as taught in word all righteousness. He was not *ignava opera*, *Philosophia sententia*; like those Masters of Philosophy, so frequently taxed and derided by the *Satyrists*; who by a horrid garb, supercilious looks, and loud declamations, would seem to discountenance those vices which themselves practised; nor like those hypocritical Law-

οὐδὲν ψυχρότερον τῶ κατὰ λό-
γον φιλοσοφῆσαι. Chrys.

Ἐν τῷ βῆμα τῶ τρόπῳ κατήγορον.
Naz.

Luc. 11. 46.

yers in the Gospel, who laded other men with heavy burthens, such as themselves would not touch with one of their fingers: No, he imposed nothing on us, which he did not first bear upon his own shoulders: the strictness of his life did, in all respects, correspond with the severity of his Precepts; or rather did indeed much exceed them. They therefore who pretend to believe his doctrine, and avow themselves bound to observe his Law, are consequently engaged to follow his practice, in which his Doctrine and Law are signally exemplified.

VI. It being the design of divine goodness, in sending our Saviour, to render us good and happy, to deliver us from sin and misery, to instruct us in the knowledge, and excite us to the practice of all virtue; and thereby to qualify us for the enjoyment of a blessed immortality; effecting all this in a way agreeable to our natural condition and capacity; there could not be devised any more powerful means, or more convenient method of accomplishing those excellent purposes, than by propounding such an example, and obliging us to comply therewith: the which may appear, 1. by considering in general the advantage and efficacy that good example is apt to have upon practice; 2. by weighing the peculiar excellency of our Saviour's example above all others, in order to those ends; and 3. by surveying the particular instances of imitable goodness represented in the life of our Saviour.

1. Good example is naturally an effectual instrument of good practice; for that it doth most compendiously, pleasantly and easily instruct; representing things to be done at one view, in a full body, cloathed with all their modes and circumstances; it recommends them to us, by the most plain and plausible way of reasoning, (and withal the most sure and safe) the authority of wise and good men; it encourageth, by evidently declaring the practicableness of rules prescrib'd; it kindleth and rouseth mens courage, by a kind of contagion, as one flame doth kindle another; it raiseth a worthy emulation of doing laudable things, which we see done; or of obtaining a share in the commendations and rewards of virtue. It urgeth modesty, breeding shame and regret in them who act contrarily thereto; it awakeneth curiosity, thereby producing a desire to make trial of what it proposeth; it affecteth and pleaseth the fancy, thereby insinuating an approbation, admiration and liking of the good things, which it representeth; briefly, it exciteth and engageth all our passions, setting on work all those powerful springs of activity, it consequently is, in its own nature, an efficacious mean of good practice. This we may in general say of all good examples; but,

2. More especially the example of *Christ* doth in efficacy and influence upon good practice, surpass all others; upon several accompts.

First, In that it is a sure and infallible rule; an entire and perfect rule of practice; deficient in no part, swerving in no circumstance from truth and right, which privileges are competent to no other example. The practice of the best men is not always to be imitated, nor ever absolutely as a certain ground of action; it is to be (so far as we have ability) considered, examined and compared to more certain rules; (the Divine Laws, and the Principles of right Reason) according to their agreement with which they are to be followed; they are indeed (before trial of the case) probable arguments of what is done by them being good and lawful; they do outweigh slender and obscure reasonings about the goodness of things; they may, when opportunity, leisure, or ability of farther enquiry and judgment about things are wanting, serve to direct us; but they are not thoroughly sure rules, or perfect measures of our duty. We should beware lest we be seduced even by holy persons; and therefore with circumspection and caution should peruse their story, and contemplate their demeanour; whereof those which are explicitly commended, or allowed by the divine judgment, we may, being assured that we are in the same circumstances, safely follow (taking them for monitories, encouragements and excitements to our duty) but those that are directly condemned by the same sentence, or apparently devious from God's Law, we as carefully should avoid; such as are of a doubtful and unaccountable nature we are to suspend about, and not to ground upon; nor to argue from the fact to the rightfulness of them; the safest way being always (as we are able) to have recourse to the simple, plain and perspicuous precepts of God, and dictates of reason. For the best men have been always subject to errors and infirmities; the fountain of original corruption in them was never so dried up, or closely stopped, but that some impure streams have bubbled forth; the fire of natural concupiscence was never so utterly quenched, but that sometimes it would blaze, or smoke out in bad actions; that intestine enemy (the flesh) was never thoroughly subdued, nor the body of sin quite slain and mortified in any other

It was ill said of Seneca: *Catonis a-brietas Obiecta est. & facilius efficitur, quisquis objecerit hoc crimen, honestum, quam turpem Catonem.*

mortal

mortal man: Good men have ever had some foul spots, or deforming wrinkles appearing in the beauteous face of their conversation; they have had their inequalities and indispositions of humour; their ebbs of devotion; their fits of sloth; their wanton freaks; their slips often, and sometimes their fall; they have been subject to be deluded by mistake, to be surprized by inadvertency, to be transported by passion, to be swayed by temper, to be biased by interest, to be allured by temptation into false and unwarrantable proceedings; they might sometime fail in the substance, oftner in the degree, in the manner, in the circumstances of action; we find them often complaining of their proneness to do amiss, bemoaning the wretched frailty of their state; yea often repenting and bitterly mourning for their actual transgressions: There hardly is any Saint, recorded in Scripture, without some blemish in his actions; which shews our weakness, and ingageth us to be wary. They were indeed endowed with sufficient competencies of divine light and graces suitable to their private needs, or to the publick exigencies of their times, places, occasions and affairs; but not with the perfection and extream degrees thereof, requisite to preserve them from all miscarriage; so that we are not always, or in all cases, to conform our actions to their examples: We must not learn to equivocate of *Abraham*, nor to circumvent of *Jacob*, nor to be cholerick of *Moses*, (so as in our excess of passion to break the Tables of the Divine Law nor of *Eli* to be fondly affectionate, or indulgent to our relations, nor of *David* to utter uncharitable imprecations; nor to dissemble of *St. Peter*; nor of *St. Paul* to revile Magistrates: The use we are to make of many practices, of most eminently pious men, is not to be misguided by them into wrong paths; not by them to authorize, or excuse our presumptuous misdeeds; but to make us to admire, and to rely upon the Divine Mercy, which so graciously did overlook and pardon their offences; to provoke us to an imitation of their repentance; to render us watchful in shunning those rocks, upon which persons, so skilful in the conduct of their lives, have dashed; to engage us to humility, by considering so manifest arguments of our frailty, and our being obnoxious to greater and more frequent miscarriages

But as to our Saviour's example, the case is quite different; for though he did Miracles as God, he commanded as *Christ*; he did many heroical things in discharge of his office, &c. in which things, we cannot, or may not imitate him; yet whatever in his life was in its own nature imitable by us, which did not exceed our natural powers, nor disagree with our condition and quality; whatever he as Man, in a private capacity, as subject to the Divine Law, with regard thereto performed, we may with all freedom, confidence and security imitate; nor can so doing incur any danger of error, or guilt; for we cannot, without great folly and impiety, suspect any fault, or imperfection in his most pure, righteous and innocent life: He was *holy, harmless, undefiled, and separated from sinners*: He was a *lamb without blemish and without spot*; He was *in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin*. He did no sin, nor was any guile found in his mouth. God gave him of his Spirit not by measure: these are the voices and elogies of the Sacred Oracles concerning him. The heavenly extraction, even of his humanity, derived no original contagion from our polluted stock, and rendered him free from the common incentives of evil concupiscence. The inseparable presence of the Divinity with him (*for God was with him*, as *St. Peter* expressed it) and the unrestrained effusion of the Holy Spirit upon him did preserve him from all defilements of infectious conversation in this World; a clear evidence of divine light always shining in his Soul, directed him infallibly in the paths of truth and righteousness: No tempest of cross accidents without, nor any situations of internal passion could discompose the steady calm and serenity of his mind; no allurements of worldly pleasure, nor temptation of profit could pervert his practice, or seduce his heart, being enflamed with most intense love of God, and entire charity to men: so that his example must needs be a perfect rule and sure direction to us. Which consideration cannot but yield great encouragement and comfort in following him; freeing us from all anxious doubt, and suspicion of mistake in our spiritual progress; like the presence of a sure guide to the bewildered Traveller; like the appearance of a Star to the weather-beaten Mariner; like that miraculous

Pillar

Heb. 7. 26.

1 Pet. 1. 19.

Heb. 4. 15.

1 Pet. 2. 22.

Joh. 3. 34.

2d. 10.

Pillar of Fire, which safely conducted the wandering *Israelites* through the unknown and unfrequented Passages of a wild Desert. But farther,

Secondly, The peculiar excellency of our Lord's Example appears, in that he was, by the Divine Providence, to this very purpose designed, and sent into the World, as well by his Practice as by his Doctrine, to be the guide and master of holy life, and obedience to all men; and did accordingly propound to himself this end of his actions, that he might be imitated

by his Disciples. So he declareth himself, as to some considerable passages of his life, and thence, by reasonable inference, we may suppose the same of the rest, so far as they might be conducive to the same end; especially, since of some performances, no other, or no so probable account can be given, as that they were done for exemplarity: For why should he fast, who had no sins to be repented of, no rebellious flesh to be tamed, no intemperate desires to be mortify'd, no coldness of devotion to be enlivened thereby? And why did he offer himself to be Baptized, who had no original stain to be cleansed of, no fault to be forgiven, no want of special grace to be conferr'd? Why, but by his exemplary fulfilling all righteousness, to teach us ready obedience to all Divine Institutions, and peaceable compliance with all laudable customs: So an ancient Writer wisely descanteth upon those Practices of our Saviour: *He was* (saith that Writer) *Baptized, and fasted, not because he had need of any cleansing, or fasting, who in nature was pure and holy; but that he might attest to the truth of St. John, and might exhibit a pattern to us.* What

Διὰ τὸτο καὶ αὐτὸς ἐνήσειυσεν ἐκ αὐτοῦ ταύτης δειμένῃ, ἀλλ' ἡμᾶς παιδεύων. Chryl. Tom. 2. p. 81.

induc'd him to condescend to such a mis-beseeming employment to appearance, as the washing of his disciples feet, he doth himself tell us: *If I then* (saith he) *your Lord and Master have washed your feet, ye ought also to wash one another's feet; for I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done unto you.* This was his professed scope and drift, in that admirable deportment of his, to teach us humility, charity and condescension toward the meanest of our Brethren. What did those exuberant instances of charity, practised by him, import? this especially, that we should imitate them; hither he drives them; *This* (saith he) *is my commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you.* Why was he, in his disposition, so meek and gentle, in his conversation so humble and lowly? to this purpose, that we might of him learn those excellent qualities: *Learn of me* (saith he) *for I am meek and lowly in heart.* And St. Peter saith, *That Christ suffered for us, leaving us an example, that we should follow his steps;* signifying, that he designed his patience to be exemplary to us. If then our Saviour, in his humility, his charity, his meekness, his patience, intended his life to be exemplary, and expressly propounded it as such; then certainly, in his devotion, his self-denial, his justice, in all other virtues he had the same intention; and what he intended, God designed to be; and what God designed to be, was doubtless eminently conducive to the end designed; and therefore our Saviour's life was most exemplary. Other Saints indeed were of very exemplary conversation, but either proved to be so, according to ordinary course of providence, without any peculiar designation thereto (their free choice conspiring, with God's Grace, in producing good works shining before men) or at most, by a restrained determination to some particular time, place or people; as *Moses* was chosen and appointed to conduct the

Ἐβραῖοι καὶ ἐνήσειυσεν ἐκ αὐτοῦ ἀπορρησέως ἢ νηστίας χρεῖαν ἔχων καὶ καθάρσεως ὅτι οὐ σὺ καθάρσεως καὶ ἁγίου, ἀλλ' ἵνα ἰδῶν ἡ ἀληθείαν περὶ μαρτυρήσῃ καὶ ἡμῖν ὡς ἀγαθὸν παρὰ χηλῶ.

John. 15. 12.

Matt. 11. 21.

1 Pet. 2. 21.

Acts 7. 35.

Psal. 106. 23.

Psal. 78. 70.

Jer. 1. 5.

Joh. 5. 35.

Λύχνη

καίόμεν καὶ

φαίνων.

Israelites; *David* was taken from the sheepfold, and following the ewes great with young, to feed Jacob God's people, and Israel his inheritance; *Jeremy* was sanctified from his birth, and ordained to be a Prophet of the Nations in his times, and St. *Paul* was separated from the womb to be a Preacher of the Christian Faith: these, and such like eminent persons, Almighty God, in his goodness, was pleased to raise up, to be, in their generations, as it were partial and temporary Saviours, as by declaring his will, and revealing his truth to men, so by guiding them with a remarkable example; these *burning and shining* * *Lamps* (as St. *John the Baptist* is called) were indeed, like lamps set up in some particular families, with a competent lustre, to dispel the present darkness, shining within their definite sphere, and for a determinate time; but our Saviour, like the Sun, fixed in a higher orb, was ordained with a perpetual and unconfined splendour to illuminate the Universe; to cause a general and

everlasting day of healthful and comfortable knowledge over the face of the whole earth. He was *that true light, which enlighteneth every man coming into the world; He was prepared before the face of all people, to be a light to lighten the Nations* (not Israel only, but the Nations indefinitely, or all Nations.) He was ordained, not Commander of a single Regiment, or Party, but Captain-General of all Mankind, to conduct all those who were disposed to follow him, by a victorious obedience, into that triumphant state of everlasting joy and happiness. His example doth belong unto us all without exception, by divine ordination; for *we, all of us, were* (to use St. Paul's expression) *predestinated to be conformed to the image of God's Son; that he might be the first-born among many brethren.* So it was, and so it became the infinite goodness, and philanthropy of God, to bestow upon mankind one perfectly good example, inviting to all virtue, and so fit to countervail all those many bad ones, wherewith we converse, enticing to vice; to set forth, among so many imperfect ones, one accomplished piece of his heavenly workmanship, able to attract the eyes, and ravish'd the hearts of all men with admiration of its excellent worth and beauty; to offer to our view some discernible representation of his invisible perfections; that so we might better be induced and inured to apprehend, love, reverence and imitate himself, by contemplation of that most exquisite image of him; to give an evident proof, that the highest virtue is not unpracticable, that humane nature, by aid and guidance of the Divine Spirit, may arrive to the sublimest pitch of perfection in goodness; in fine, to expose such a common, sweet and lovely pattern, as we with assurance, joy and comfort may follow.

Thirdly, Our Saviour's example is especially influential upon practice, in that it was, by an admirable temperament, more accommodated for imitation than any others have been. That the perfect copy of his most holy life seems more easie to be transcribed, than the ruder draughts of other holy Men; for though it were written with an incomparable fairness, delicacy and evenness; not slurred with any foul blot, nor any where declining from exact straightness; yet were the lineaments thereof exceeding plain and simple; not by any gaudy flourishes, or impertinent intrigues rendred difficult, to studious imitation; so that even women and children, the weakest and meanest sort of people, as well as the most wise and ingenuous, might easily perceive its design, and with good success write after it. His was a gentle and steady light, bright indeed, but not dazzling the eye; warm, but not scorching the face of the most intent beholder; No affected singularities, no supercilious morosities, no frivolous ostentations of seemingly high, but really fruitless performances; nothing that might deter a timorous, discourage a weak, or offend a scrupulous disciple, is observable in his practice: but on the contrary, his conversation was full of lowliness and condescension, of meekness and sweetness, of openness and candid simplicity; apt to invite and allure all men to approach toward it, and with satisfaction to enjoy it. He did not seclude himself into the constant retirements of a Cloyster, nor into the farther recesses of a Wilderness (as some others have done) but conversed freely and indifferently with all sorts of men, even the most contemptible and odious sort of men, *Publicans* and *Sinners*; like the Sun, with an impartial bounty, liberally imparting his pleasant light and comfortable warmth to all. He used no uncouth austerities in habit, or diet, but complied, in his garb, with ordinary usage, and sustained his life with such food as casual opportunity did offer; so that his indifferency, in that kind, yielded matter of obloquy against him from the fond admirers of a humorous preciseness. His Devotions, (though exceedingly sprightly and fervent) were not usually extended to a tedious and exhausting duration, nor strained into ecstatic transports, charming the natural senses, and overpowering the reason; but calm, steady and regular, such as Persons of honest intention and hearty desire (though not endued with high fancy, or stirring passion) might readily imitate. His zeal was not violent or impetuous, except upon very great reason, and extraordinary occasion, when the honour of God, or good of Men, was much concerned. He was not rigorous in the observance of traditional rites and customs, (such as were needlessly burthensome, or which contained

tained in them more of formal shew, than of real fruit) yet behaved himself orderly and peaceably, giving due respect to the least institution of God, and complying with the innocent customs of men; thereby pointing out unto us the middle way between peevish superstition and boisterous faction; which as always the most honest, so commonly is the most safe and pleasant way to walk in. He delighted not to discourse of sublime mysteries (although his deep wisdom comprehended all) nor of subtle speculations and intricate questions, such as might amuse and perplex, rather than instruct and profit his Auditors; but usually did feed his Auditors with the most common and useful truths, and that in the most familiar and intelligible language; not disdaining the use of vulgar sayings, and trivial proverbs, when they best served to insinuate his wholesome meaning into their minds. His whole life was spent in exercise of the most easie and pleasant, yet most necessary and substantial duties; obedience to God, charity, meekness, humility, patience, and the like, the which, that he might practise with the greatest latitude, and with most advantage for general imitation, he did not addict himself to any particular way of life, but disentangled himself from all worldly care and business; chusing to appear in the most free, though very mean condition; that he might indifferently instruct, by his example, persons of all callings, degrees and capacities; especially the most, that is the poor; and might have opportunity, in the face of the world, to practise the most difficult of necessary duties; lowliness, contentedness, abstinence from Pleasure, contempt of the World, sufferance of injuries and reproaches. Thus suited and tempered by Divine Wisdom was the life of our blessed Saviour, that all sorts of men might be in an equal capacity to follow him, that none might be offended, affrighted, or discouraged, but that all might be pleased, delighted, enamoured with the homely Majesty, and plain beauty thereof: And in effect so it happened, that ordinary people (the weakest, but sincerest and unprejudiced sort of men) were greatly taken with, most admired and applauded his deportment; many of them readily embracing his doctrine, and devoting themselves to his discipline; while only the proud, envious, covetous and ambitious *Scribes* and *Lawyers* rejected his excellent doctrine, scorned the heavenly simplicity, and holy integrity of his life.

Fourthly, The transcendent excellency of our Lord's example appeareth, in that it is attended with the greatest obligations (of gratitude and ingenuity, of justice, of interest, of duty) mightily engaging us to follow it. For 'tis not the example of an ordinary, or inconsiderable Person, of a stranger, of one indifferent, or unrelated to us; but of a glorious Prince, of heavenly extraction; (the first-born Son of the Almighty God, sole heir of eternal Majesty) of our Lord and Master, to whom we are for ever bound, by indispensable bands of duty and obedience; of our great Captain, who hath undertaken to subdue our enemies, and hath obliged us to follow his conduct, in a holy warfare, against them, by most solemn sacraments and vows; of our best friend, from whom we have received the greatest favours and benefits imaginable; of our most gracious Saviour, who, for our sake, hath voluntarily sustained most bitter pains, and shameful contumelies; having sacrificed his dearest heart-blood to redeem us from intolerable slaveries, and from extremities of horrible misery; of him, to whom, in all respects, we do owe the highest respect, love and observance that can be: Now it is the nature and property both of respect and love (such as upon so many grounds we owe to him) to beget in the person respecting and loving, an endeavour (answerable to the degrees of those dispositions) of conforming to, and resembling the qualities and manners of the person respected, or beloved. We see how readily Children do comply with the customs of their Parents and Tutors; Servants of their Masters and Patrons; Subjects of their Princes and Governours, with a studious earnestness composing themselves to express in their carriage, not only their good or their indifferent fashions and manners, but even their most palpable deformities and vices; insomuch, that a whole family, a city, a nation may be debauch'd from its sobriety, or reform'd from its dissoluteness, even instantly, by the example of one person, who, by his place, power and authority, challengeth extraordinary reverence from men; and much greater influence hath hearty love to transform our manners into an agreement with the manners of him we love: *What a man loves, that he imi-*

tateth so much as lies in his power, saith Hierocles, truly. For love being founded on a good esteem, and a benevolent inclination thence resulting, engageth the affectionate person to admire the qualities of him he affecteth, to observe his deportments, to make the most advantageous construction of what he doeth; to fancy he doeth all things with best reason and discretion; to deem therefore, that all his actions deserve and require imitation: hence doth love either find, or soon produce a competent similitude in the parties, (a similitude of mind, of will, of inclination and affection; an *Eadem velle & nolle*;) It doth forcibly attract as to a vicinity of place and converse, so to an agreement of affections and actions; it uniteth the most distant, it reconcileth the most opposite, it turneth the most discordant natures into a sweet consent, and harmony of disposition and demeanour. We then having the greatest reason both to honour and love our Saviour, surely his example being duly studied and considered by us, must needs obtain a superlative influence upon our practice, and be very powerful to conform, and assimilate it to his.

These considerations may suffice, to shew the peculiar excellency of our Saviour's example in vertue, and efficacy upon our practice; the same more abundantly might be deduc'd from a survey of the most considerable particulars, in which we may and ought to imitate him. But the time will not suffer us to launch forth into so vast a sea of discourse. I shall only therefore, from the premises, exhort, That if any earnest desire of happiness, any high esteem of virtue, any true affection to genuine sanctity do lodge in our breasts, we should apply this most excellent means of attaining them; the study and endeavour of imitating the Life of our Lord: If we have in us any truth and sincerity, and do not vainly prevaricate in our profession of being *Christ's* Disciples, and votaries of that most Holy Institution, let us manifest it by a real conformity to the practice of him who is our Master, and author of our faith: If we have in us any wisdom, or sober consideration of things, let us employ it in following the steps of that infallible guide, designed by heaven to lead us in the streight, even and pleasant ways of righteousness, unto the possession of everlasting bliss: If we do verily like, and approve the practice of *Christ*, and are affected with the innocent, sweet and lovely comeliness thereof, let us declare such our mind by a sedulous care to resemble it. If we bear any honour and reverence, any love and affection to *Christ*; if we are at all sensible of our relations, our manifold obligations, our duties to our great Lord, our best friend, our most gracious Redeemer; let us testify it by a zealous care to become like to him: Let a lively image of his most righteous and innocent, most holy and pious, most pure and spotless life be ever present to our fancies; so, as to inform our Judgments, to excite our affections, to quicken our endeavours, to regulate our purposes, to correct our mistakes, to direct, amend and sanctifie our whole lives. Let us, with incessant diligence of study, meditate upon the best of histories, wherein the tenour of his divine practice is represented to us; revolving frequently in our thoughts all the most considerable passages thereof, entertaining them with devout passions, impressing them on our memories, and striving to express them in our conversations; let us endeavour continually to walk in the steps of our Lord, and *to follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth*; which that we may be able to do, do thou, O Blessed Redeemer, draw us, draw us by the cords of thy love; draw us by the sense of thy goodness; draw us by the incomparable worth and excellency of thy person; draw us by the unspotted purity and beauty of thy example; draw us by the merit of thy precious death, and by the power of thy Holy Spirit; *Draw us, good Lord, and we shall run after thee.* Amen.

Coll. after
Easter, 2.

Almighty God, who hast given thine only Son, to be unto us, both a sacrifice for sin, and also an ensample of godly Life; give us grace, that we may always most thankfully receive that his inestimable benefit; and also daily endeavour our selves to follow the blessed steps of his most holy life, through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

S E R M O N IV.

Of Submission to the Divine Will.

L U K E xxii. 42.

Nevertheless let not my will, but thine be done.

Matt. 26. 39

THE great controversie, managed with such earnestness and obstinacy between God and Man, is this, whose will shall take place, his or ours: Almighty God, by whose constant protection and great mercy we subsist, doth claim to himself the authority of regulating our practice, and disposing our fortunes; but we affect to be our own Masters and Carvers; not willingly admitting any Law, nor patiently brooking any Condition, which doth not suit with our fancy and pleasure: to make good his right, God bendeth all his forces, and applieth all proper means both of sweetness and severity (perswading us by arguments, soliciting us by entreaties, alluring us by fair promises, scaring us by fierce menaces, indulging ample benefits to us, inflicting sore corrections on us, working in us and upon us by secret influences of grace, by visible dispensations of Providence) yet so it is, that commonly nothing doth avail, our will opposing it self with invincible resolution and stiffness.

Here indeed the business pincheth; herein as the chief worth, so the main difficulty of religious practice consisteth, in bending *that iron sinew*; in bringing our proud hearts to stoop, and our sturdy humours to buckle, so as to surrender and resign our wills to the just, the wise, the gracious will of our God, prescribing our duty, and assigning our lot unto us. We may accuse our nature, but it is our pleasure; we may pretend weakness, but it is wilfulness, which is the guilty cause of our misdemeanours; for by God's help (which doth always prevent our needs, and is never wanting to those who seriously desire it) we may be as good as we please, if we can please to be good; there is nothing within us that can resist, if our wills do yield themselves up to duty: 43. to conquer our reason is not hard; for what reason of man can withstand the infinite cogency of those motives, which induce to obedience? What can be more easie, than by a thousand arguments, clear as day, to convince any man, that to cross God's will is the greatest absurdity in the world, and that there is no madness comparable thereto? Nor is it difficult, if we resolve upon it, to govern any other part or power of our nature; for what cannot we do, if we are willing? what inclination cannot we check, what appetite cannot we restrain, what passion cannot we quell or moderate; what faculty of our soul, or member of our body is not obsequious to our will? Even half the resolution with which we pursue vanity and sin, would serve to engage us in the ways of wisdom and virtue.

Wherefore in overcoming our will the stress lieth; this is that impregnable fortress, which everlastingly doth hold out against all the batteries of reason and of grace; which no force of perswasion, no allurements of favour, no discouragement of terrour can reduce: this puny, this impotent thing it is, which grappleth with Omnipotency, and often in a manner baffleth it: And no wonder; for that God doth not intend to overpower our will, or to make any violent impression on it, but only to *draw it* (as it is in the *Prophet*) *with the cords of a man*, or by rational inducements to win its consent and compliance; our

Chryl. Tom.
6. Or. 12. in
1 Cor. Or. 17.
Tom. 5. Or. 28.

Quodcumque
sibi imperavit
animus obtinuit.
it. Sen. de Ira.
2. 12.

Hof. 11. 4

our service is not so considerable to him, that he should extort it from us; nor doth he value our happiness at so low a rate, as to obtrude it on us. His victory indeed were no true victory over us, if he should gain it by main force, or without the concurrence of our will; our works not being our works, if they do not issue from our will; and our will not being our will, if it be not free; to compel it were to destroy it, together with all the worth of our virtue and obedience: wherefore the Almighty doth suffer himself to be withstood,

Ἐπεὶ γὰρ καὶ αὐτὰ διαβάλλει τὰ
ἀγαθὰ εἰ μὴ τοιαύτη συνῶν ἔσται ἡ
φύσις; ὡς καὶ ἐκόντας περιδραμεῖν,
καὶ χάριν ἔχειν πολλὰ. Chrys. in
1 Cor. 9. 2.

and beareth repulses from us; nor commonly doth he master our will otherwise, than by its own spontaneous conversion and submission to him: if ever we be conquer'd, as we shall share in the benefit, and wear a crown; so we must join in the combat, and partake of the victory, by subduing our selves: *we must take the yoke upon us*; for God is only served by volunteers; he summoneth us by his Word, he attracteth us by his Grace, but we must *freely come unto him*.

Our will indeed of all things is most our own; the only gift, the most proper sacrifice we have to offer; which therefore God doth chiefly desire, doth most highly prize, doth most kindly accept from us. Seeing then our duty chiefly moveth on this hinge, the free submission and resignation of our will to the will of God; it is this practice, which our Lord (who came to guide us in the way to happiness, not only as a teacher by his word and excellent doctrine, but as a leader, by his actions and perfect example) did especially set before us; as in the constant tenour of his life, so particularly in that great exigency which occasioned these words, wherein, renouncing and deprecating his own will, he did express an entire submission to God's will, a hearty complacence therein, and a serious desire that it might take place.

For the fuller understanding of which case, we may consider, that our Lord, as partaker of our nature, and, *in all things, (bating sin) like unto us*, had a natural humane will, attended with senses, appetites and affections, apt from objects incident to receive congruous impressions of pleasure and pain; so that whatever is innocently grateful and pleasant to us, that he relish'd with delight, and thence did incline to embrace; whatever is distastful and afflictive to us, that he resented with grief, and thence was moved to eschew; to this probably he was liable in a degree beyond our ordinary rate; for that in him nature was most perfect, his complexion very delicate, his temper exquisitely sound and fine; for so we find, that by how much any man's constitution is more sound, by so much he hath a smarter gust of what is agreeable or offensive to nature: If perhaps sometimes infirmity of body, or distemper of soul (a savage ferity, a stupid dulness, a fondness of conceit, or stiffness of humour, supported by wild opinions, or vain hopes) may keep men from being thus affected by sensible objects; yet in him pure nature did work vigorously, with a clear apprehension and lively sense, according to the design of our maker, when into our constitution he did implant those passive faculties, disposing objects to affect them so and so, for our need and advantage; if this be deemed weakness, it is a weakness connexed with our nature, which he therewith did take, and *with which*

Ἐπεὶ καὶ αὐ-
τὸς πείνη-
σαι ἀδύναται.
Heb. 5. 2.

Heb. 4. 15.
a. 10, 18.

(as the *Apostle* saith) *he was encompassed*. Such a will our Lord had, and it was requisite he should have it; that he thence might be qualified to discharge the principal instances of obedience, for procuring God's favour to us, and for setting an exact pattern before us; for God imposing on him duties to perform, and dispensing accidents to endure, very cross to that natural will, in his compliance and acquiescence thereto, his obedience was thoroughly tried; his virtue did shine most brightly; therefore (as the *Apostle* saith) *he was in all points tempted*; thence, as to meritorious capacity, and exemplary influence, *he was perfected through suffering*.

Heb. 10. 7.
Psal. 40. 7.
Joh. 6. 38. 5.
30. 4. 34.

Hence was the whole course of his life and conversation among men, so designed, so modelled, as to be one continual exercise of thwarting that humane will, and closing with the divine pleasure: it was predicted of him, *Loe I come to do thy will O God*; and of himself he affirmed, *I came down from Heaven not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me*; whereas therefore such a practice is little seen in atchieving easie matters, or in admitting pleasant occurrences; it was ordered for him, that he should encounter the roughest difficulties,

faculties, and be engaged in circumstances, most harsh to natural apprehension and appetite; so that if we trace the footsteps of his life from the sordid manger to the bloody cross, we can hardly mark any thing to have befallen him apt to satisfy the will of nature. Nature liketh respect, and loatheth contempt; therefore was he born of mean Parentage, and in a most homely condition; therefore did he live in no garb, did assume no office, did exercise no power, did meddle in no affairs, which procure to men consideration and regard; therefore an impostor, a blasphemer, a forcerer, a loose companion, a seditious incendiary were the titles of honour, and the elogies of praise conferred on him; therefore was he exposed to the lash of every slanderous, every scurrilous, every petulant and ungoverned tongue.

Nature doth affect the good opinion, and good will of men, especially when due in grateful return for great courtesie and beneficence; nor doth any thing more grate thereon, than abuse of kindness; therefore, could he (the world's great friend and benefactor) say, *the world hateth me*; therefore were those, Joh. 5. 18, 25 whom he, with so much charity and bounty had instructed, had fed, had cured of diseases (both corporal and spiritual) so ready to clamour, and commit outrage upon him; therefore could he thus expostulate, *Many good works* Joh. 10. 31 *have I shewed you from my father, for which of those works do ye stone me?* therefore did his kindred slight him, therefore did his disciples abandon him, therefore did the grand traitor issue from his own bosome; therefore did that whole Nation, which he chiefly sought and laboured to save, conspire to persecute him, with most rancorous spite and cruel misusage. Joh. 13. 18

Nature loveth plentiful accommodations, and abhorreth to be pinched with any want; therefore was extreme penury appointed to him; he had no revenue, no estate, no certain livelyhood, not *so much as a house where to lay his head*, or a piece of money to discharge the tax for it; he owed his ordinary support to alms, or voluntary beneficence; he was to seek his food from a *fig-tree on the way*; and sometimes was beholden for it to the courtesie of Publicans; Matt. 8. 20; 17. 25. 21. 19. Luc. 8. 3. *δι' ἡμᾶς ἐπιώχωνται*, he was (saith St. Paul) *a beggar for us*. 2 Cor. 8. 9

Nature delighteth in ease, in quiet, in liberty; therefore did he spend his days in continual labour, in restless travel, in endless vagrancy, *going about and doing good*; ever hastening thither, whither the needs of men did call, or their benefit invite; therefore did he *take on him the form of a servant*, and was among his own followers *as one that ministrETH*; therefore he *pleased not himself*, but suited his demeanour to the state and circumstances of things, complied with the manners and fashions, comported with the humours and infirmities of men. Joh. 4. 16; Matt. 4. 23. 8. 35. Act. 10. 38. Phil. 2. 7. Luc. 22. 27. Marc. 6. 6. Matt. 21. 28;

Nature coveteth good success to its designs and undertakings, hardly brooking to be disappointed and defeated in them: therefore was he put to water dry sticks, and to wash *Negroes*; that is, to instruct a most dull and stupid, to reform a most perverse and stubborn generation; therefore his ardent desires, his solicitous cares, his painful endeavours for the good of men did obtain so little fruit; had indeed a contrary effect, rather aggravating their sins than removing them, rather hardening than turning their hearts, rather plunging them deeper into perdition, than rescuing them from it: therefore so much in vain did he, in numberless miraculous works, display his power and goodness, convincing few, converting fewer by them; therefore although he taught with most powerful authority, with most charming gracefulness, with most convincing evidence, yet, *Who* (could he say) *bath believed our report?* though he most earnestly did invite and allure men to him, offering the richest boons that heaven it self could dispense, yet, *Ye will not* (was he forced to say) *come unto me, that ye may be saved*; although with assiduous fervency of affection he strove to reclaim them from courses tending to their ruin, yet how he prospered, sad experience declareth, and we may learn from that doleful complaint, *How often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, but ye would not*: *ἐκ ἡδελύσαστε*, your will did not concur, your will did not submit. Luc. 4. 22, 23; Joh. 12. 38. Joh. 5. 40. Luc. 13. 34; 19. 42.

In fine, natural will seeketh pleasure, and shunneth pain; But what pleasure did he taste; what inclination, what appetite, what sense did he gratifie? How did

Marc. 1. 13. did he feast, or revel? How, but in tedious fastings, in frequent hungers, by
 35. passing whole nights in prayer, and retirement for devotion upon the cold
 Luc. 5. 16. mountains? What sports had he, what recreation did he take, but feeling in-
 Joh. 4. 6. 31. cessant gripes of compassion, and wearisome roving in quest of the lost sheep?
 Luc. 6. 12. In what conversation could he divert himself, but among those, whose doltish in-
 Matt. 14. 23. capacity and froward humour, did wring from his patience those words, *How*
 18. 12. *long shall I be with you, how long shall I suffer you?* What Musick did he hear?
 17. 17. What but the ratlings of clamorous obloquy, and furious accusations against
 him? to be desperately maligned, to be insolently mocked, to be stiled a King,
 and treated as a slave; to be spit on, to be buffeted, to be scourged, to be
 drenched with gall, to be crowned with thorns, to be nailed to a cross; these
 were the delights which our Lord enjoyed, these the sweet comforts of his
 life, and the notable prosperities of his fortune: such a portion was allotted to
 him, the which he did accept from God's hand with all patient submission,
 with perfect contentedness, with exceeding alacrity, never repining at it, ne-
 ver complaining of it, never flinching from it, or fainting under it; but pro-
 ceeding on in the performance of all his duty, and prosecution of his great de-
 signs, with undaunted Courage, with unwearied industry, with undisturbed
 tranquillity and satisfaction of mind.

Had indeed his condition and fortune been otherwise framed; had he come
 into the world qualified with a noble extraction; had he lived in a splendid e-
 quipage, had he enjoyed a plentiful estate and a fair reputation, had he been
 favoured and caressed by men; had he found a current of prosperous success,
 had safety, ease and pleasure waited on him; Where had been the pious resig-
 nation of his will; where the precious merit of his obedience; where the glo-
 rious lustre of his example? how then had our frailty in him become victori-
 ous over all its enemies; how had he triumphed over the solicitations and al-
 lurements of the flesh; over the frowns and flatteries of the world; over the
 malice and fury of hell; how then could he have so demonstrated his immense
 charity toward us, or laid so mighty obligations upon us?

Such in general was the case, and such the deportment of our Lord; but
 there was somewhat peculiar, and beyond all this occurring to him, which
 drew forth the words of our Text: God hath tempered for him a potion
 of all the most bitter and loathsome ingredients that could be; a drop whereof
 no man ever hath, or could indure to sip; for he was not only to undergo what-
 ever load humane rage could impose, of ignominious disgrace, and grievous
 pain; but to feel dismal agonies of Spirit, and those *unknown Sufferings*, which
 God alone could inflict, God only could sustain: *Behold, and see*, he might
 well say, *if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me;*
wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger? He was to
 labour with pangs of Charity, and through his heart to be pierced with deep-
 est commiseration of our wretched case: he was to crouch under the burthen
 of all the sins (the numberless most heinous sins and abominations) ever com-
 mitted by mankind: he was to pass through the hottest furnace of Divine
 Vengeance, and by his blood to quench the wrath of Heaven flaming out a-
 gainst iniquity; he was to stand (as it were) before the mouth of Hell, belch-
 ing fire and brimstone on his face: his grief was to supply the defects of our
 remorse, and his suffering in those few moments to countervail the eternal tor-
 ments due to us: He was to bear the hiding of God's face, and an eclipse of
 that favourable aspect, in which all blifs doth reside; a case which he that so
 perfectly understood, could not but infinitely resent: these things with the
 clearest apprehension he saw coming on him; and no wonder that our nature
 started at so ghastly a sight; or that humane instinct should dictate that petiti-
 on, *Father if thou wilt, let this cup pass from me;* words implying his most
 real participation of our infirmity; words denoting the height of those sad e-
 vils which encompassed him with his lively and lowly resentment of them;
 words informing us, how we should entertain God's chastisements, and
 whence we must seek relief of our pressures (that we should receive them,
 not with a scornful neglect or sullen insensibility, but with a meek contri-
 tion of soul; that we should entirely depend on God's pleasure for sup-

Δι' αὐτῶν
 οὐκ παύσασθαι
 τὸν ἐλεησόν
 ἡμᾶς κύριε.
 Lit. Gr.

Lam. 2. 12.

support under them, or a releasement from them) words which in conjunction with those following do shew how instantly we should quash and over-rule any insurrection of natural desire against the command or providence of God. We must not take that prayer to signify any purpose in our Lord to shift off his passion, or any wavering in resolution about it; for he could not any wise mean to undo that, which he knew done with God before the world's foundation; he would not unsettle that, which was by his own free undertaking, and irreversible decree; He that so often with satisfaction did foretel this event, who with so earnest desire longed for its approach; who with that sharpness of indignation did rebuke his friend offering to divert him from it; who did again repress St. Peter's animosity with that serious expostulation, *The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?* who had advisedly laid such trains for its accomplishment, would he decline it? Could that heart all burning with zeal for God and charity to men admit the least thought or motion of averseness from drinking that cup, which was the Sovereign medicine administered by divine wisdom for the recovery of God's Creation? No; had he spake with such intent, legions of Angels had flown to his rescue; that word, which framed the worlds, which filled the tempests, which ejected Devils, would immediately have scattered his enemies, and dashed all their projects against him; wherefore those words did not proceed from intention, but as from instinct, and for instruction; importing, that what our humane frailty was apt to suggest, that his divine virtue was more ready to smother; neither did he vent the former, but that he might express the latter.

Επιθυμία
ἐρεθίζουσα.
Luc. 22. 19.
Joh. 16. 11.

Matt. 26. 53.

He did express it in real effect; immediately with all readiness addressing himself to receive that unfavoury potion; he reached out his hand for it, yielding fair opportunity and advantages to his persecutors; he lifted it up to his mouth, innocently provoking their envy and malice; he drank it off with a most steady calmness, and sweet composure of mind, with the silence, the simplicity, the meekness of a lamb, carried to the slaughter; no fretful thought rising up, no angry word breaking forth, but clear patience, enlivened with a warm charity, shining in all his behaviour, and thorough every circumstance of his passion.

Such in his life, such at his death was the practice of our Lord; in conformity whereto we also readily should undertake whatever God proposeth, we gladly should accept whatever God offereth, we vigorously should perform whatever God enjoyneth, we patiently should undergo whatever God imposeth or inflicteth, how cross soever any duty, any dispensation may prove to our carnal sense or humour.

To do thus, the contemplation of this example may strongly engage us, for if our Lord had not his will, can we in reason expect, can we in modestly desire to have ours? must we be cockered and pleased in every thing, when as he was treated so coarsely, and crossed in all things? can we grutch at any kind of service, or sufferance; can we think much (for our trial, our exercise, our correction) to bear a little want, a little disgrace, a little pain, when the Son of God was put to discharge the hardest tasks, to endure the worst adversities?

But farther to enforce these duties, be pleased to cast a glance on two considerations. 1. What the Will is to which, 2. Who the Willer is to whom, we must submit.

1. What is the Will of God? Is it any thing unjust, unworthy, or dishonourable, any thing incommodious or hurtful, any thing extremely difficult, or intolerably grievous that God requireth of us, to do or bear? No: he willeth nothing from us, or to us, which doth not best become us, and most behove us; which is not attended with safety, with ease, with the solidest profit, the fairest reputation, and the sweetest pleasure.

Two things he willeth; that we should be good, and that we should be happy, the first in order to the second, for that virtue is the certain way, and a necessary qualification to felicity.

The will of God, saith St. Paul, is our sanctification; what is that? what, but that the decays of our frame, and the defacements of God's Image within us should be repaired; that the faculties of our soul should be restored to their original integrity and vigour; that from most wretched slaveries we should be translated into a happy freedom, yea, into a glorious kingdom; that from despi-

cable beggary and baseness we should be advanced to substantial wealth, and sublime dignity; that we should be cleansed from the foulest defilements, and decked with the goodliest ornaments; that we should be cured of most loathsome diseases, and settled in a firm health of soul; that we should be delivered from those brutish lusts, and those devilish passions, which create in us a hell of darkness, of confusion, of vexation; which dishonour our nature, deform our soul, ruffle our mind, and wrack our conscience; that we should be endowed with those worthy dispositions and affections, which do constitute in our hearts a heaven of light, of order, of joy and peace; dignify our nature, beautify our soul, clarify and cheer our mind, that we should eschew those practices, which never go without a retinue of woful mischiefs and sorrows, embracing those which always yield abundant fruits of convenience and comfort; that, in short, we should become friends of God, fit to converse with Angels, and capable of Paradise.

† Tim. 2. 7.
† Pet. 3. 9.
Ezek. 33. 11.

God (saith St. Paul again) *willeth all men to be saved; he willeth not* (saith St. Peter) *that any man should perish*; He saith it himself, yea, he sweareth it, *that he hath no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked should turn from his way and live*: And what is this will, what, but that we should obtain all the good whereof we are capable; that we should be filled with joy, and crowned with glory; that we should be fixed in an immoveable state of happiness, in the perpetual enjoyment of God's favour, and in the light of his blissful presence: that we should be rid of all the evils, to which we are liable; that we should be released from inextricable chains of guilt, from incurable stings of remorse, from being irrecoverably engaged to pass a disconsolate eternity in utter darkness, and extream Woe? Such is God's Will; to such purposes every command, every dispensation of God (how grim, how rough soever it may seem) doth tend: and do we refuse to comply with that good Will; do we set against it a Will of our own, affecting things unworthy of us, things unprofitable to us, things prejudicial to our best interests; things utterly baneful to our souls? Do we reject the Will that would save us, and adhere to a Will that would ruine us; a foolish and a senseless Will, which flighting the immense treasures of Heaven, the unfading glories of God's Kingdom, the ineffable joys of eternity doth catch at specious nothings, doth pursue mischievous trifles; a shadow of base profit, a smock of vain honour, a flash of sordid pleasure; which passeth away like *the mirth of fools, or the crackling of thorns*, leaving only soot, black and bitter behind it.

Eccles. 7. 6.

But at least e'er we do thus, let us consider, whose Will it is, that requireth our compliance.

Psal. 148. 5.
Apoc. 4. 11.

It is the Will of Him, whose Will did found the earth, and rear the Heaven; whose Will sustaineth all things in their existence and operation; whose Will is the great law of the World, which universal nature in all its motions doth observe; which reigneth in Heaven, the blessed Spirits adoring it, which swayeth in Hell it self, the cursed Fiends trembling at it; And shall we alone (we pitiful Worms crawling on earth) presume to murmur, or dare to kick against it?

It is the Will of our Maker, who together with all our other faculties did create and confer on us, the very power of Willing: and shall we turn the Work of his hands, the gift of his bounty against him?

It is the Will of our Preserver who together with all that we are, or have, continually doth uphold our very Will it self; so that without employing any positive force, meerly by letting us fall out of his hand, he can send us and it back to nothing: and shall our Will clash with that, on which it so wholly dependeth; without which it cannot subsist one moment, or move one step forward in action?

It is the Will of our Sovereign Lord, who upon various indisputable accounts hath a just right to govern us, and an absolute power to dispose of us: ought we not therefore to say with old Eli, *It is the Lord, let him do to me as it seems good to him*? Is it not extream iniquity, is it not monstrous arrogance for us, in derogation to his Will, to pretend giving law, or picking a station to our selves? Do we not manifestly incur high treason against the King of Heaven by so invading his office, usurping his authority, snatching his Sceptre into our hands, and setting our Wills in his Throne?

1 Sam. 3. 8.

It is the Will of our Judge, from whose mouth our doom must proceed, awarding Life or Death, Weal or Woe unto us; and what sentence can we expect, what favour can we pretend to, if we presumptuously shall offend, oppose that Will, which is the supream Rule of Justice, and sole Fountain of Mercy?

It is the Will of our Redeemer, who hath bought us with an inestimable price, and with infinite pains hath rescued us from miserable Captivity under most barbarous enemies, that obeying his Will we might command our own, and serving him we might enjoy perfect freedom; And shall we, declining his call and conduct out of that unhappy state bereave him of his purchase, frustrate his undertakings, and forfeit to our selves the benefit of so great Redemption?

It is the Will of our best friend; who loveth us much better, than we do love our selves; who is concerned for our welfare, as his own dearest interest, and greatly delighteth therein; who by innumerable experiments hath demonstrated an excess of kindness to us; who in all his dealings with us purely doth aim at our good, never charging any duty on us, or dispensing any event to us, so much with intent to exercise his power over us, as to express his goodness towards us; who never *doth afflict or grieve us* more against our Will, than Lam. 3. 39. against his own desire; never indeed but when goodness itself calleth for it, and even mercy doth urge thereto; to whom we are much obliged, that he vouchsafeth to govern and guide us, our service being altogether unprofitable to him, his governance exceedingly beneficial to us: And doth not such a Will deserve regard, may it not demand compliance from us? to neglect or infringe it, what is it? is it not palpable folly, is it not foul disingenuity, is it not detestable ingratitude?

So doth every relation of God recommend his Will to us; and each of his Attributes doth no less: for,

It is the Will of him, who is most holy, or whose Will is essential rectitude: how then can we thwart it, without being stained with the guilt, and wounded with a sense of great irregularity and iniquity?

It is the Will of him who is perfectly just; who therefore cannot but assert his own righteous Will, and avenge the violation thereof: is it then adviseable to drive him to that point by wilful provocation; or to run upon the edge of necessary severity?

It is the Will of him who is infinitely wise; who therefore doth infallibly know what is best for us, what doth most besit our capacities and circumstances; what in the final result will conduce to our greatest advantage and comfort; shall we then prefer the dreams of our vain mind before the oracles of his Wisdom; shall we, forsaking the direction of his unerring Will, follow the impulse of our giddy humour?

It is the Will of him, who is immensely good and benign; whose Will therefore can be no other than good Will to us; who can mean nothing thereby but to derive bounty and mercy on us: Can we then fail of doing well, if we put our selves entirely into his hands; are we not our greatest enemies, in withstanding his gracious intentions?

It is finally the Will of him, who is uncontrollably powerful; whose Will therefore must prevail one way or other: either with our Will, or against it, either so as to bow and satisfy us, or so as to break and plague us: for *My counsel* Isa. 46. 11. *(saith he) shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure.* As to his dispensations, we may fret, we may wail, we may bark at them, but we cannot alter or avoid them: sooner may we by our moans check the tides, or by our cries stop the Sun in his carriere, than divert the current of affairs, or change the state of things established by God's high decree; what he layeth on, no hand can remove; what he hath destined, no power can reverse; our anger therefore will be ineffectual, or impatience will have no other fruit, than to aggravate our guilt, and augment our grief.

As to his commands, we may *lift up our selves against him*, we may fight Dan. 5. 23i stoutly, we may in a sort prove Conquerors; but it will be a miserable victory, the Trophies whereof shall be erected in Hell, and stand upon the ruins of our happiness; for while we insult over abused grace, we must fall under in-

possession, or reach. He meant not to exclude God, and his Providence; but rather supposed that as the ground and cause of his self-sufficiency; according as otherwhere he expresseth it: *Not as if we were sufficient of our selves,* 2 Cor. 3. 5: *but our sufficiency is of God:* Nor did he intend to exclude the need of other creatures otherwise than as considered without his possession, or beyond his power; But he meaneth only, that he did not desire or lack more than what God had supplied him with; had put into his hand, or had set within his reach; that his will did suit to his state, his desire did not exceed his power.

This is the meaning of the word, which the Apostle useth; but for the more full and clear understanding the virtue it self, we shall first consider the object, about which it is conversant, then the several Acts, which it requireth, or wherein the exercise thereof consisteth.

1. The object of contentedness is the present state of things whatever it be (whether prosperous or adverse, of eminency or meanness, of abundance or scantness) wherein by divine Providence we are set: *τὰ ἐν οἷς ἐσμεν, the things in which we are,* that is our present Condition, with all its circumstances: so it may be generally supposed, considering that it is ordinary, and almost natural for men (who have not learned as St. Paul had done, or are not instructed, and exercised in the Practice of this Duty) to be dissatisfied, and disquieted in every state; to be always in want of something; to find defects in every fortune; to fancy they may be in better case, and to desire it earnestly: If we estimate things wisely, rich men are more liable to discontent than poor men. It is observable, that prosperity is a peevish thing, and men of highest fortune are apt most easily to resent the smallest things: a little neglect, a slight word, an displeasing look doth affect them more than reproaches, blows, wrongs, do those of a mean condition.

Prosperity is a nice and squeamish thing, and it is hard to find any thing able to please men of a full and prosperous state, which being incapable of bettering in substantial things, they can hardly find Matter of solid delight. Whereas a poor estate is easily comforted by the accession of many things which it wanteth: a good meal, a small gift, a little gain, or good success of his labour doth greatly please a poor man with a very solid pleasure: but a rich man hath nothing to please him, but a new toy, a puff of applause, success at a horse-race, at bowls, at hunting; in some petty sport and pastime, which can yield but a very thin and transitory satisfaction to any man not quite brutified and void of sense: whence contentedness hath place, and is needful in every condition, be it in appearance never so prosperous, so plentiful, so pleasant. *In the fulness of his Sufficiencies, he shall be in straits.*

Job 20. 22.

The formal object thereof may indeed seem to be a condition distastful to our sense, or cross to our fancy; an adverse or strait condition; a condition of poverty, of disgrace, of any great inconvenience or distress incident to us in this World; but since the most men are absolutely in such a condition, exposed to so many wants and troubles; since many more are needy comparatively, wanting the conveniencies that others enjoy, and which themselves affect; since there are few, who in right estimation are not indigent and poor, that is, who do not desire and fancy themselves to want many things which they have not (for wealth consisteth not so much in the possession of goods, as in apprehension of freedom from want, and in satisfaction of desires) since care, trouble, disappointment, satiety and discontent following them, do not only haunt cottages, and stick to the lowest sort of People, but do even frequent palaces, and pursue men of highest rank; therefore any state may be the object of contentedness; and the duty is of a very general concernment; Princes themselves need to learn it; the lessons teaching it, and the arguments perswading it may as well suit the rich and noble, as the poor and the peasant; so our Apostle himself doth intimate in the words immediately following our Text: *I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound; Every where,* Phil. 4. 12: *and in all things I am instructed both to be full, and to be hungry: both to abound and to suffer need;* he had the art not only to manage well both conditions, but to be satisfied in either.

Chrys. Tom. 73
p. 68.

But seeing real adversity, poverty and disgrace have naturally the strongest influence in disturbing and disordering our minds; that contentedness is plain-

ly most needful in such cases, as the proper support, or medicine of our mind in them; that other states do need it only as they, by fancy or infirmity, do symbolize or conspire with these; therefore unto persons in these states we shall more explicitly apply our directions, and persuasions, as to the proper and primary subjects of contentedness; the which by analogy, or parity of reason may be extended to all others who by imaginary wants and distresses do create displeasure to themselves. So much for the object, or the subject, of the virtue.

2. The acts, wherein the practice thereof consisteth (which are necessary ingredients, or constant symptoms of it) belong either to the mind and understanding, or to the will and appetite, or to external demeanour and practice; being 1. right opinions and judgments of mind, 2. fit dispositions and affections of heart, 3. outward good actions and behaviours, in regard to our condition and the events befalling us; the former being as the root and stock, the latter as the fruits and the flowers of the duty: unto which may be reduced the correspondent negations, or absence of bad judgments, affections and deportments in respect to the same objects.

(1.) As to our opinions and judgments of things contentedness requireth, that

1. We should believe our condition whatever it be to be determined by God, and that all events befalling us, do proceed from him; at least that he permiteth and ordereth them, according to his judgment and pleasure: that *Ἐκ τῆς* τῶς θεοῦ πᾶς καὶ καλῆ καὶ κακῆς, all (as the Prophet singeth) *both good and evil proceedeth out of the mouth of the most High*; that affliction (as Job said) *cometh not forth of the dust, neither doth trouble spring out of the ground*; as a thing arising spontaneously, or sowed by the hand of some creature, but rather descendeth from him, who saith, *I form the light, and create darkness; I make peace, and create evil; I the Lord do all these things.*

We are apt, when any thing falleth out unpleasant to us, to exclaim against fortune, and to accuse our stars; or to inveigh against the second causes which immediately offend us, ascribing all to their influence; which proceeding in us doth argue in us a *Heathenish* ignorance and infidelity, or at least much inconsiderateness, and impotency of mind; that our judgment is blinded and clouded, or perverted and seduced by ill passions; for that in truth there is not in the world any occurrence meerly fortuitous, or fatal (all being guided and weilded by the powerful hand of the All-wise, and Almighty God) there is no creature which in its agency doth not depend upon God, as the instrument of his will, or subordinate thereto; wherefore upon every event we should, raising our minds above all other causes, discern and acknowledge God's hand; as David did, when Shimei cursed him; *Let him* (said the good King) *curse because the Lord hath said unto him, Curse David*; as Job did when he was rifled of his goods, *The Lord* (said he) *gave, and the Lord hath taken away*; as our Saviour did, when in regard to the fore hardships he was designed to undergo, he said, *The Cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink?*

2. Hence we should always judge every thing which happeneth to be thoroughly good and fit, worthy (all things considered to be appointed, or permitted by that Governor of things; not entertaining any harsh thoughts of God, as if he were not enough wise, just, or benign in ordering us to be afflicted or crossed; but taking all occurrences to be well consistent

with all God's holy Perfections and Attributes.

We are apt to conceit, that the World is ill ordered, when we do not thrive and prosper therein; that every thing is irregular, which squareth not to the models of our fancies; that things had gone much better, if our designs had found success; but these are vain and perverse conceits; for that certainly is most good, which seemeth good to God; his will is a perfect standard of right and convenience, his eye never aimeth wrong, his hand never faileth

to hit the mark of what is best; *All his paths are mercy and truth; He is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works*: So did King Hezekiah rightly judge,

Soph. Aj. Lor.
Lam. 3. 38.
Amos 3. 6.
1 Kings 12.
15, 24.

El. 45. 7.

Atque Deos
atque astra
vocat credulitas
mater.

2 Sam. 16. 10.

Job 1. 21.

Joh. 18. 11.

Παρεχρήσωμαι τοῖνυν παρεκάλω
τὸ σοφὸν τῆ παιδὸς κυβερνήτη καὶ ἐξέσω-
μαι τὰ οἰκονομήματα ὅποια πατ' ἐν ᾧ
καὶ ἐν θυμῳ, καὶ ἐν λυπῇ, &c. Theod.
Ep. 136.

Placet homini quicquid Deo placuit, Sen.
Ep. 75.

Στεργεν γὰρ καὶ τὰ κακά, ὅτι ἀπὸ τῆς
σοφίας περιανδύμενα, καὶ ταῦτα πάν-
τως νομίζεν συμφέροντα. Theod. Ep. 15.
Οἶδε γὰρ ὅτι σοφὸς τὸ συμφέρον, καὶ ὅτι
ἀγαθὸς ὅτι ἡμῖν προσμαίεται. Id.
Ep. 18.

Psal. 25. 10.
145. 17.

judge, when upon denunciation of a sad doom to his country and posterity, he replied to the Prophet, *Good is the word of the Lord which thou hast spoken*; 2 Kings 20. 19. so even the Pagan Sage discerned, when he thus rebuked a male-content; *You slave, do you forsooth desire any thing, but what is best? and is not that only best, which seemeth best to God?*

Ἀρδεύουσιν ἄλλοις θέλει, ἢ τὸ ἀ-
μεινον; ἄλλοις τι ἀμεινον, ἢ τὸ θεῷ δο-
κῶν; Arr. 11. 7.

3. We should even be satisfied in our mind that according to God's purpose all events do tend and conduce to our particular welfare; being not only good to us as members of the world, and in order to more general ends, but serving towards our private benefit and advantage. We may be ready perhaps to confess, that whatever happeneth may be indeed just and fit in some distant, and occult respects, but hardly can we be induced to allow, that what we feel offensive to our sense or fancy, is really good for us, or was meant for our benefit; we cannot easily discern any thing of love or favour in such matters: Those sort of *Aphorisms*, in Holy Scripture, *Happy is the man whom God correcteth*; *As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten*; sound strangely, and are huge *Paradoxes* to us; such is our blindness of mind, and dullness of apprehension: but God knoweth with so exact a skillfulness to manage things, that every particular occurrence shall be advantageous to the person, whom it toucheth; and accordingly to each one he dispenseth that which is most suitable to him; whence, as frequently it is necessary for our good that we should be crossed (for that indeed otherwise we should often much harm, sometimes we should quite undo our selves) so it always, when God so ordereth it, is to be deemed most profitable and wholesome for us: we are therefore in reason obliged to take the saddest accidents, and sharpest afflictions, coming upon us by providence, to be no other than fatherly corrections, or friendly rebukes, designed to render us good and happy; as arguments therefore and instances of especial good-will toward us; conceiving under every dispensation that we do as it were hear God speaking to us, as he did to those in the Prophet: *I know the thoughts, that I think toward you, thoughts of peace, and not* Jer. 29. 11. *of evil, to give you an expected end.*

4. Hence we are to believe, that our present Condition (whatever it be to carnal, or worldly sense) is in right judgment, all things considered, the best, most proper, most desirable for us; better than we, if it were at our discretion and choice should put our selves into: for that God (*the Saviour of all men*, who desireth that no man should perish; who is good to all, and whose tender mercies are over all his works; who exceedingly tendereth the welfare of his children and subjects) doth ever (here in this life, the time of merit and trial) with a most wise good-will design our best good; and by the most proper methods (such as do best suit our circumstances and capacities) doth aim to draw us unto happiness; and accordingly doth assign a station for us most befitting in order to that great end; we therefore should think our selves well placed, because we are where God doth set us, that we have enough, because we have what God allotteth us.

1 Tim. 2. 4.
Ezek. 33. 11.
2 Pet. 3. 9.
Psal. 145. 9.

There are other more particular judgments, which contentedness involveth, or which are required toward it; such as these; that nothing originally is due to us, but all cometh purely from divine favour and bounty; that all adversities are justly, and deservedly inflicted on us, as the due wages, or natural fruits of our sins; that our happiness dependeth not on any present enjoyments or possessions, but may well subsist without them; that a competency (or so much as sufficeth to maintain our life without intolerable pain) ought to satisfy our desires; but these, and the like judgments will come opportunely to be considered as motives to the practice of the duty.

(2.) From such acts of our mind or intellective parts concerning things incident to us, should proceed the following dispositions of will and affection.

1. We should entertain all occurrences, how grievous soever to us, with intire submission, and resignation of our will to the will of God; wholly acquiescing in his good pleasure; saying in our hearts after our Lord, *Let not my will, but thine be done*; with good Eli, *It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good*; with David, *Behold here I am, let him do to me as seemeth*

Luk. 22. 42.
1 Sam. 3. 18.
2 Sam. 15. 26.

good

Εἴ ταύτη θεοῖς φίλον, ταύτη γενέσθω.
 Ἀλλ' ἄλλον θέλω τὸ γινώσκον· κρετ-
 τον γὰρ ἡ γνῆμαι ὃ ὁ θεὸς θέλει· ἢ ἐγὼ
 προσωποποιεῖμαι, διακονῶ καὶ ἀκούεσθαι
 ἐκείνου, συνορμῶ, ἀρέγομαι, ἀπλῶς
 συνθέλω. Αἰτ. 3. 7.

good to him; even with Socrates, if so it pleaseth God so let it be; with Epictetus, I always chiefly will that, which cometh to pass; for I account that better which God willeth than what I will my self; I will adhere as a minister and follower to him, I pursue, I affect, I simply will with him: looking upon them as sent from God we should heartily bid

M. Anton. 3.
 4. 2. 17. 10.
 11. 12. 1.

them welcome, we should kindly embrace them, we should use them with all fair respect: ἀπαύξεναι τὰ συμβαίνοντα (to hug, or kindly to embrace things incident) φιλεῖν τὰ ἀπονεμόμενα (to love things dispensed by providence) are precepts, which even as dictated by natural reason Philosophers do much inculcate.

Prov. 19. 3.

This excludeth all rebellious Insurrection, and swellings of mind against providence, such as argue that we dislike God's government; that were we able we should struggle with God's will; that we gladly would shake off his yoke; all such ill resentment and repining at our lot, which maketh God's hand grievous, and his yoke uneasy to us: such affections as the wise man toucheth, when he saith, *The foolishness of Man perverteth his way, and his heart fretteth against the Lord.*

Let no man be moved by these afflictions;
 μηδὲν ἀσάινε-
 δς (i. e. θορυ-
 βεῖσθαι Chrys.)
 1 Thess. 3. 3.

2. We should bear all things with steady calmness and composedness of mind, suppressing, or quelling those tumults, those storms, those excesses of passion, which the sense of things disgustful is apt to excite; such as are immoderate grief, fierce anger, irksome despair, and the like. No adversity should so ruffle our minds, as to defeat and pervert the use of our reason, so as to hinder us from perceiving, or performing what becometh us, so as to ingage us into any irregular, or unseemly behaviour.

Ἡ δὲ τὸ κόσμη λύπη θάνατον κατέρ-
 γάζεται. 2 Cor. 7. 10.

Prov. 12. 22.

Εὐδοκῶ ἐν ἀδυνατείαις, ἐν ὕβρεσι, ἐν ἀνάγκαις, ἐν στενοχωρίαις ὡς Χριστῷ.
 2 Cor. 12. 10.
 Εἰς πᾶσαν ὑπομονὴν καὶ μακροθυμίαν ἡμεῖς χαρῶμεθα. Col. 1. 11.

3. We should indeed bear the worst events with an εὐθυμία, that is, with a sweet and chearful disposition of mind, so as not to be put out of humour; not to be dejected, or quite discouraged by them, not to fall into that heaviness, which (as the wise Man saith) maketh the heart of man to stoop; but rather finding delight and complacence in them, as considering whence they come, whither they aim and tend: such was the disposition and demeanour of the Apostles and primitive good Christians in the midst of their most grie-

Acts 5. 41.
 Heb. 10. 34.
 Jam. 1. 2.
 2 Cor. 6. 10.

vous adversities and sufferings; they rejoiced, &c. they did take joyfully the spoiling of their goods, they did account it all joy, when they fell into divers tribulations: they were ὡς λυπόμενοι, ἀλλ' ὅμως χαίροντες, as grieved but always rejoicing; their state was grievous, but their heart was constantly chearful. Such

Psal. 33. 11.
 97. 12.
 Phil. 4. 4.
 3. 1.
 2 Cor. 13. 11.
 1 Pet. 4. 13.

a constant frame of mind we should maintain, so continually prepared we should be against all contingencies, that nothing should happen amiss to us, so as deeply to affect us, or to unsettle us in our humour; that every thing from God's hand should be acceptable; that no sadness may seize on us, at least that we do not indulge or cherish it; that in no wise we suffer any regret to quench that spiritual comfort and joy in God, which becometh the upright (as the Psalmist saith) and which we are so often enjoined perpetually to maintain, as in all cases so particularly under afflictions and trials. We cannot indeed hardly be content, if we are not chearful; for it is hard to be altogether on the suffering and bearing hand, without any pleasure; the mind can hardly stand in a poise; so as neither to sorrow or joy: we cannot digest adversity, if we do not relish it; we shall not submit to it as his will, if we do not take it for an argument of his love: εὐδοκῶ, I (saith St. Paul) have a liking or pleasure in infirmities; in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake; ~~for when I am weak then I am strong.~~

2 Cor. 12. 10.

4. We should with faith and hope rely and wait on God for the removal, or easement of our afflictions; or however we should confide in him for grace, and strength to support them well: as our Saviour did, when he prayed, *Father, if thou be willing remove this Cup*; as they did in the Prophet, who said, *In the way of thy judgments, O Lord, we have waited on thee*; according to that rule in the Lamentation; *It is good that a man should both hope, and wait quietly for the Salvation of the Lord*; and those precepts in the Psalms; *Rest in the Lord and wait patiently for him; wait upon the Lord, be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart.*

Luke 22. 42.
 Isa. 26. 8.
 33. 21.
 Lam. 3. 26.
 Psal. 37. 7.
 24. 17.
 Psal. 40. 1.
 33. 20. 62. 1.
 25. 3. 69. 6.
 44. 19. 16. 8.

We

We should in any case be ready with the holy *Psalmist* thus to interrogate, *Psal. 42. 1* and sustain our selves, *Why art thou cast down. O my Soul, why art thou so disquieted within me? Hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise him, for the help of his countenance.*

Remembring, and considering, that (as we are expressly taught in *Scripture*, and as all our Religion doth clearly suppose) *God knoweth to rescue the Godly out of tribulation*, (he knoweth the proper season, when it is fit to do it) *2 Pet. 2. 3.* that he is faithful, and will not suffer us to be tempted above what we are able: *1 Pet. 5. 7.* but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that we may be able to bear it; reflecting, I say, on these certain points of Christian Truth, we should never sorrow as those who are without hope; we should never despair of a good riddance from our adversity, when it shall be seasonable or beneficial for us; we should always be assured of a comfortable support under it, which is usually better than deliverance from it; our minds should never sink into despondency, or disconsolateness: that this is practicable in the worst case, we have conspicuous instances to assure us; it hath been the practice of most illustrious and excellent persons, particularly of the holy *Apostles*; never was any condition, in outward respects and appearance, more forlorn and dismal than was theirs; yet it no-wise bereaved them of hope, or courage; *We* (they could say) *are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair, persecuted, but not forsaken, cast down, but not destroyed.* *2 Cor. 4. 8.* *1 Cor. 4. 11.*

5. We should indeed not so much as faint, or languish in our minds upon any such occasion; no adversity should impair the forces of our reason or our spirit; should enervate our courage, or slacken our industry; should render us sick, or weak in heart; for, *If* (saith the wise Man) *thou faint in the day of adversity, thy strength is small* ('tis the sign of an infirm mind) and *μὴ ἐκλινῇς, not to falter or decay, μὴ ἐκλινῇς, not to be dissolved or disjointed in our souls* (as the body is in scorbutick distempers) are rules prescribed to us in such cases: We do then indeed need a firm and robust constitution of soul; we should then bear up most resolutely and stoutly: the encouragement of *Moses* to the people, entering into battel may well be accommodated to us, in regard to our conflicts with adversities; *Let not your hearts faint, fear not and do not tremble, neither be ye terrified because of them.* *Prov. 24. 10.* *2 Cor. 4. 16.* *Rev. 2. 3.* *2 Thess. 3. 13.* *Gal. 6. 9.* *Heb. 12. 3.* — *nunc animus opus est, nunc pectore firmo.* *Deut. 20. 3.*

6. We should not be weary of our condition, or have irksome longings for alteration; but with a quiet indifferency, and willingness of mind lie under it, during God's pleasure; according to the *Wise-man's* advice; *My son despise not the chastening of the Lord, neither be weary of his correction*; and that of the *Apostle*, enforced by our Lord's example; *Consider him, that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.* We should not think God slow, or his time long and tedious, as if he were forgetful of us, or backward to succour us: as the *Psalmist* was enclined to do, when in the day of trouble he brake forth into these conceits and expressions; *Will the Lord cast off for ever, and will he be favourable no more: is his mercy clean gone for ever, doth his promise fail for evermore; Hath God forgotten to be gracious; hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies?* Thus he in a sad mood was apt to think and speak; but recollecting himself he perceived it was his errour, and confessed it was his fault thus to imagine, *I said, it was mine infirmity*; and it will be ours likewise, if we entertain such conceptions and resentments: we should with the same mind endure our present state, as we do pass through a hard winter, or a time of foul weather, taking it for seasonable and fit, because the wise Author of nature hath so appointed and ordered it. *Psal. 77. 19.*

7. We should by adverse accidents be render'd lowly in our own eyes, and sober in our conceits of our selves; meek and gentle, tender and pliable in our temper and frame of spirit; sensible of our unworthiness and meanness, of our natural frailty, penury and misery, of our actual offences and miscarriages; deeply affected in regard to the awful majesty and power, to the perfect holiness and strict justice of God: they should quell our haughty stomach, they should supple our stiff wilfulness, they should soften our hard hearts, they should mitigate our peevish humours; to effect these things is usually the design of such accidents, and it is ever the best fruit of them; this is that, which *St. Peter* adviseth to, when he saith, *Be humbled under the mighty hand of God;* *1 Pet. 5. 6.*

which God approveth and encourageth with a gracious promise, when he
 Isa. 66. 2. saith;— *To this man will I look, even to him that is of a poor and contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word:* this disposition is an inseparable adherent to contentedness; he that hath not his spirit thus broken or mollified, will hardly be content in any state; he that is haughty in conceit, and sturdy in humour will every where find that which will cross and disturb him.

8. It is required that we should, notwithstanding any meanness, any hardness of our condition, be meekly and kindly affected toward others, being satisfied and pleased with their more prosperous state. We should not be angry with the World, because we do not thrive or flourish in it; we should not be fullen or peevish toward any man, because his fortune is better than ours; we should not repine or grudge at the good success of any of our brethren, because we want the like our selves; *we should rather rejoyce with those that rejoyce*; innocently filching some pleasure from them, or borrowing some satisfaction from their enjoyments. It is humane thus to do, because of the natural cognation and friendship of men; it is more especially Christian, because of our spiritual consanguinity; by virtue whereof we are so knit together, and made *members each to other*, that if (as
 Rom. 12. 15. St. Paul telleth us) *one member suffer, all the members suffer with it, and if one member be honoured, all the members should rejoyce with it*: We can hardly be content without thus appropriating the goods, and sharing in the delights of others; he can never be content, who looketh *with an evil eye* upon other mens prosperity; he cannot do well himself, who loveth not to see his neighbour do well; numberless occasions will happen to discompose and vex him.

Adversity impatiently born is apt to sour our spirits, and render us froward toward men; especially when it proceedeth from the unkindness, ingratitude, or treachery of friends, or of persons obliged to us for our good Will, or for benefits done to them; but nothing should render us unkindly disposed toward the World, nothing should extinguish charity in us toward any man; so plain reason teacheth us, so great examples enforce. *Moses* did not lose his affection towards his Countrymen, because he was by one of them threatened away into banishment and vagrancy; the *Apostles* became not disaffected to the World, because it misused and persecuted them; our Lord did continue most earnestly to desire, and laboriously to endeavour the good of those who most despitefully used him; Like theirs, in all cases, should our disposition be; we
 Psal. 37. 8. should ever observe the *Psalmist's* advice; *Cease from anger, forsake wrath, fret not thy self in any wise to do evil.* Again,

9. Contentedness doth imply a freedom from all solicitude and anxiety of mind, in reference to provision for our needs, and conveniences of life; according to those rules and precepts of *casting our burthen and care upon the Lord*, of *being careful for nothing, but commending our affairs to God's ordering*; according to that most comfortable precept of our Lord, *Take no care, saying what shall we eat, or what shall we drink, or how shall we be clothed; for your heavenly Father knoweth, that ye want all these things*; If we do not thus, it is hardly possible that we should be content; if we do not depend upon Providence, we cannot scape being often distracted with care, and perplexed with fear; we cannot chearfully hope for any thing we need, nor be quietly secure of any thing we possess.

10. It requireth also that we should curb our desires, and confine them in the narrowest bounds we can; so as not to affect more in quantity, or better in quality, than our nature and state do require: if we must have superfluities, if we can only relish dainties, we shall never be pleased; for as nature hath limits, and is content with little; as there is no state in this World, the exigencies whereof may not be answered with a competence; so curiosity is an infinite, and insatiable thing: *He that loveth pleasure shall be a poor man; he that loveth wine and oil shall not be rich*; that is, he which is curious and nice in his desires, will never have enough: The rule, which (according to St. Paul) should regulate our desires is this; *Having food and rayment, let us with them be satisfied*: if
 this

Ita plerumque contingit, ut dum aliquos fratres nostros in quantalacumque requie constitutos in mediis nostris anxietatibus cogitamus, non parva ex parte recreemur. tanquam & nos ideo ipsi quietius tranquillusque vivamus. Aug. Ep. 144.

Rom. 12. 15.

1 Cor. 12. 26.

1 Pet. 5. 7.

Psal. 37. 5.

55. 23.

Phil. 4. 6.

Matt. 6. 31.

Ἡ δὲ πολλὴ πολυτελείας ἀπολαύσασιν οἱ ἥκιστα ταύτης δεόμενοι. Cic. ad Mente.
Ventre nihil novit frugalius. Jov. Sat. 5.

Αἱ χεῖρες οὐσιν ὁρᾷς αὐταρκείᾳ περιερίζεται. Cl. Alex. Fed. 2. 1.
 1 Tim. 6. 8.

this will satisfy us; we may easily obtain satisfaction; a moderate industry with God's blessing, will procure so much; God hath promised to bestow it; if this will not suffice, there is no sure way of getting or keeping more; As God is no-wise obliged to provide us superfluities, or concerned to relieve our extravagant longings; so we may fear that Providence will be ready to cross us in our cares and endeavours tending to those purposes; so that we shall be disappointed in the procurement, or disturbed in the fruition of such needless things: However he that is most scant in his desires, is likely to be most content in his mind: *He (as Socrates said) is nearest the Gods (who needs nothing) that needeth fewest things.*

Si ad naturam vires nunquam eris pauper; si ad opinionem, nunquam dives. Epic. Sen. Ep. 16.

Ὁ ἐλαχίστην δεόμενος ἐγγύς αὐτῶν. Socr. in Xenoph. Apomn.

In fine, contentedness doth import, that whatever our condition is, our minds and affections should be modelled, and squared just according to it; so that our inclinations be compliant, our desires be congruous thereto, so that easily we can comport with the inconveniences, can relish the comforts, can improve the advantages sticking thereto; otherwise like an ill-made Garment, it will fit unhandsome upon us, and be troublesome to us. It is not usually our condition it self, but the unsuitableness thereof to our disposition and desires (which soureth all its sweets, and rendreth its advantages fruitless) that createth discontent; for (although it be very mean) others bear the same chearfully; many would be glad thereof; if therefore we will be content, we must bend our inclinations, and adapt our desires to a correspondence with our state.

If we are rich, we should get a large and bountiful heart, otherwise our Wealth will hang loose about us; the care and trouble in keeping it, the suspicion and fear of losing it, the desire of amplifying it, the unwillingness to spend or use it, will bereave us of all true satisfaction therein, and render it no less unfavoury to us, than unprofitable to others.

If we are poor, we should have a frugal, provident, industrious mind, sparing in desires, free from curiosity, willing to take pains, able to digest hardships, otherwise the straitness of our condition will pinch and gall us.

Are we high in dignity or reputation? we then need a mind well ballasted with sober thoughts, otherwise the Wind of Vanity will drive us into absurd behaviours, thence will dash us upon disappointments, and consequently will plunge us into vexation and discontent.

Are we mean and low? we need a meek and lowly, a calm and steady spirit: not affecting little respects, or resenting the want of them; apt to pass over or to bear quietly petty affronts and neglects; not apt to be moved by Words signifying contempt or disdain: (else being fretted with such things, which in this ill-natur'd and hard-hearted World we may be sure often to meet with) we shall be uneasie in our minds, and impatiently wish a change of our state.

These, and the like dispositions and affections of soul this duty containeth, or requirerh: from hence should arise a correspondent external demeanour, and such actions as these which follow:

1. We should restrain our Tongues from all unseemly and unfavoury expressions, implying dissatisfaction in God's proceedings, or displeasure at his Providence; arguing desperation or distrust in God; such as were those of the discontented and impatient *Israelites*; *They (saith the Psalmist) spake against God; they said, can God furnish a table in the wilderness? behold he smote the rock, that the waters gushed out, and the streams overflowed; can he give bread also, can he provide flesh for his people?* Such as they used, of whom the Prophet saith — *When they shall be hungry, they will fret themselves, and curse their King and their God; as those in the Apocalypse, who being afflicted with deserved judgments, did blaspheme the name of God, which had power over those plagues — blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and sores.* Into such profane enormities of language is discontent apt to break forth, questioning the power of God; or his willingness to succour us; venting wrath and displeasure toward him; charging him foolishly with injustice, or with unkindness, or with negligence, or with impotency; the abstaining from which behaviour,

Psal. 78. 19. Numb. 2. 5.

Ila. 3. 21. Rev. 19. 5. 11. 21.

Job 1. 22.

Οὐκ ἔδωκεν ἀφροσύνην τῷ θεῷ.
 Ἀλλ' ἔχεν σιγὴν, καὶ ζῶν, ἐπὶ τρεῖς ἡμέρας
 καὶ νύκτας. 110m. Od. 7.

behaviour, under the sense of his bitter Calamities, is a great commendation of Job; *In all this* ('tis said) *Job sinned not, neither charged God foolishly.*

2. We should indeed forbear any the least complaint or murmuring, in regard to the dispensations of Providence;

or upon dissatisfaction in the state allotted us: St. Jude saith, that God in the last day *will come, to execute judgment, and to convince men of all their hard speeches, which ungodly sinners have spoken against him; these* (subjoyneth he) *are γοῖσαι, μεμψιμοιῖ, murmurers, that complain of their lot:* which signifieth

the heinousness and extreme dangerousness of this practice. *Wherefore doth the living man complain?* is the Prophet's question, implying it to be an unreasonable and blameable practice. Wherefore the advice of David is good; to suppress all complaint, to be still and silent in such cases: *Be still* (saith he) *and know*

Psal. 46. 10.

4. 4 37. 7.

Psal. 39. 9.

— σιωπῇ Πάσχων ἄλγεα πολλὰ βίας
 ὑποδύωμαι ἀνδρῶν. Od. 7.

Job. 40. 4.

Isa. 53. 7.

on my mouth. And thus our Saviour, when he was oppressed and afflicted, opened not his mouth.

Δόξα τῷ θεῷ πάντων ἔνεκεν. Οὐ γὰρ
 παύσομαι ὅτε ἐπιλέγων αἰεὶ ἐπὶ πᾶσι
 μοι τοῖς συμβαίνοισι. Chrys. ad Olym.
 Ep. 11.

Psal. 119. 75.

Job. 1. 21.

Yea it is our duty, in these cases, to spend our breath in declaring our satisfaction in God's dealing with us: acknowledging his wisdom, justice and goodness therein; blessing and praising him for all that hath befallen us; each of us confessing after David, *I know, O Lord, that thy judgments are right, and that thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me;* imitating Job, who upon the loss of all his goods did say no more than this; *The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.*

4. We should abstain from all irregular, unlawful and unworthy courses toward the removal or remedy of our needs, or crosses, chusing rather to abide quietly under their pressure, than by any unwarrantable means to relieve, or relax our selves; rather bearing patiently, than violently, like those in the Prophet, *breaking our yoke, and bursting our bands. Take heed, regard not iniquity; for this hast thou chosen rather than affliction.* We should rather continue poor, than by couzenage, or rapine, endeavour to raise our fortune; we should rather lye under disgrace and contempt, than by sinful or fardid compliances strive to acquire the respect and favour of men; we should rather willingly rest in the lowest condition, than do as those, who by disturbing the World, by fomenting disorders and factions, by supplanting their neighbours Welfare, by venting slanders and detractions, labour to amplify their estate: We should rather endure any inconvenience or distress, than have recourse to ways of evading them, disallowed by God; doing as the Jews did, who in their straits, against the declared pleasure of God,

Jer. 42. 15.

2. 18. 13.

Isa. 30. 2. 35.

6 31. 1.

Ezek. 17. 15.

Hos. 7. 11, 13.

set their faces toward Egypt, strengthened themselves in the strength of Pharaoh, trusted in the staff of that broken reed. In neglect or diffidence toward God, to embrace such aids, is (as God in the Prophet declareth) a very blameable and mischievous folly: Ephraim (saith he) *is like a silly dove without heart; they call to Egypt, they go to Assyria — Wo unto them, for they have fled from me; destruction unto them, because they have transgressed against me.* We may consider how St. Paul reproveth the Corinthians for seeking a redress of

1 Cor. 6. 7.

wrong, scandalous and dishonourable to the Church. *Now therefore it is utterly a fault among you, that ye go to law one with another; Why do ye not rather take wrong; why do ye not rather suffer your selves to be defrauded? even to right your selves in a way, whereby any dishonour may come to God, or damage to his Church is not to be approved; and better it is in the Apostle's judgment to bear any injury or damage ourselves, Better it is* (saith St. Peter) *if the will of God be so, that we suffer for well-doing, than to do ill. And, Let them, who suffer according to the will of God, commit the keeping of their souls to him in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creatour; is another whollom advice of that great Apostle.*

1 Pet. 3. 17.

4. 19.

5. We should, notwithstanding any adversity, proceed in our affairs (such as God requireth, or reason putteth us upon) with alacrity, courage and industry; performing however, so far as our circumstances do permit, what is good and fit for us: No disappointment, or cross, no straits or grievances of condition should render us listless, or lazy, but rather it should quicken and inflame our activity; this being a good way to divert us from the sense of our misfortunes, and to comfort us under their pressure; as also the readiest way to remove or to abate them, τὸ παρὸν ὡς δεῖ, *to order the present well*, whatever it be; to make the best of a bad matter, to march forward whither reason calls (how difficultly soever, or slowly it be) in a rough or dirty way; not to yield to difficulties, but resolutely to encounter them, to struggle lustily with them; to endeavour with all our might to surmount them; are acts worthy of a manly reason and courage; to direct ill accidents to good ends, and improve them to honest uses, is the work of a noble virtue. If a bad game be dealt us, we should not presently throw up, but play it out so well as we can; so perhaps we may save somewhat, we shall at least be busie till a better come. *Put thy trust in the Lord, and be doing good*, is the *Psalmist's* advice in such a case; and it is a practice necessary to the procuring and maintaining content: If we be not otherwise well employed, we shall be apt in our thoughts, to melancholize, and dote upon our mischances, the sense of them will fasten upon our spirits, and gnaw our hearts.

6. We should behave our selves fairly and kindly toward the instruments and abettors of our adversity; toward those who brought us into it, and those who detain us under it by keeping off relief, and those who forbear to afford the succour we might expect; forbearing to express any wrath or displeasure, to exercise any revenge or enmity toward them; but rather, even upon that score, bearing good will, and expressing kindness toward them; not only as to our brethren, whom, according to the general Law of Charity, we are bound to love, but as to the servants of God in this particular case, and the instruments of his pleasure toward us; considering, that by maligning or molesting them, we do express ill resentments of God's dealing with us, and in effect through their sides do wound his Providence; thus did the good *King* behave himself toward *Shimei*, when he was bitterly reproached and cursed by him; not suffering (upon this account, because he was God's instrument of afflicting himself) that any harm should be done unto him; thus the holy *Apostles* being reviled did bless, being defamed did intreat; thus our Lord demeaned himself toward his spiteful adversaries; who, when he was reviled, did not revile again; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but committed it to him that judgeth righteously. In all these cases we should at least observe the rules and advices of the wise Man; Say not, I will do so to him as he hath done to me; I will render to the man according to his work; Say thou not, I will recompence evil; but wait on the Lord, and he shall save thee.

Discontent usually consisteth not so much in displeasure for the things we suffer, as at the persons who bring them on us, or who do not help to rid us from them; it is their presumed injury or discourtesie which we do fret at; such passions therefore toward men being discarded, our evils presently will become supportable, and content easily will ensue. As men in any sickness or pain, if their friends are about them (affording comfort or assistance) do not seem to feel any thing, and forbear complaining; so if the World about us doth please us, if we bear no disaffection or grudge toward any person in view, our adversity will appear less grievous, it will indeed commonly be scarce sensible to us.

In these and such like acts, the duty and virtue of contentedness doth especially reside; or it is employed and exercised by them: And so much may suffice for the explication of its nature; I come now to consider the way of attaining it, intimated by *St. Paul* here, when he saith, *I have learned*:

Κερδαντέον τὸ παρὸν σὺν δολογισίᾳ
Ant. 4. 26. 6. 2.

Τὸ παρὸν ἀπευδύνειν πρὸς ὁσιότητα
καὶ δικαιοσύνην. Id. 12. 1.

Tu ne cede malis, sed contra audentior
itō.

Psal. 37. 3.

2 Sam. 16. 7.

1 Cor. 4. 12.

1 Pet. 2. 23.

3. 9.

Prov. 24. 29.

20. 22.

S E R M O N : VI.

Of CONTENTMENT.

P H I L. iv. 11.

I have learned in whatever state I am, therewith to be content.

THESE Words signify how contentedness may be attained, or how it is produced: It is not an endowment innate to us; it doth not arrive by chance into us; it is not to be purchased by any price; it springeth not up of its self, nor arriseth from the quality of any state: but it is a product of discipline; *I have learned.*

It is a question debated in *Plato*, εἰ διδασκὸν ἢ ἀγερὸν, whether *Virtue be to be learned*, *St. Paul* plainly resolveth it in this case by his own experience and testimony.

Non dat natura virtutem ars est bonum fieri. Sen. Ep. 89.

Virtus etiamsi quosdam impetus ex natura sumit, tamen perficienda doctrina est. Quintil. 12. 2.

What *Seneca* saith in general of virtue (*Nature giveth not Virtue; it is an art to become good*) is most true of this virtue; it is an art, with which we are not born, no more than with any other art or science; the which, as other arts, cannot be acquired without studious application

of mind, and industrious exercise: No art indeed requireth more hard study and pain toward the acquiry of it, there being so many difficulties, so many obstacles in the way thereto: We have no great capacity, no towardly disposition to learn it; We must, in doing it, deny our carnal sense, we must settle our wild fancy, and suppress fond conceits; we must bend our stiff and stubborn inclinations; we must repress and restrain wanton desires; we must allay and still tumultuous passions; we must cross our humour, and curb our temper; which to do is a hard chapter to learn; Much consideration, much practice, much contention and diligence are required thereto.

Hence it is an art which we may observe few do much study; and of the students therein few are great proficient; so that *Qui fit, Mecenas? Horace's* question, *How comes it to pass, that no body liveth content with the lot assigned by God?* wanted not sufficient ground.

However it is not like the *Quadrature of the circle*, or the *Philosophers Stone*, an art impossible to learned; and which will baffle all study: there are examples which shew it to be obtainable; there are rules and precepts, by observing which we may arrive to it.

And it is certainly a most excellent piece of learning; most deserving our earnest study: no other science will yield so great satisfaction, or good use; all other sciences, in comparison thereto, are dry and fruitless curiosities; for were we Masters of all other knowledge, yet wanted the skill of being content, we should not be wise or happy; happiness and discontent are *ἀσυστά* (things incompatible.)

But how then may this skill be learned: I answer, chiefly (divine grace concurring) by these three ways. 1. By understanding the rules and precepts, wherein the practice thereof consisteth. 2. By diligent exercise, or application of those rules to practice; whereby the habit will be produced. 3. By seriously considering, and impressing upon our minds those rational inducements (suggested by the nature and reason of things) which are apt to persuade the practice thereof. The *first* way I have already endeavoured to declare; the *second* wholly dependeth upon the will and endeavour of the learner; the *third*

I shall now insist upon, propounding some rational considerations, apt (by God's help) to perswade contentedness, and serving to cure the malady of discontent. They may be drawn from several heads; from God, from our selves, from our particular condition or state; from the World or general state of men here; from the particular state of other men in comparison to ours; from the nature and consequences of the duty itself: Every thing about us well examined and pondered, will minister somewhat inducing and assisting thereto.

I. In regard to God we may consider, that equity doth exact, and gratitude requireth, and all reason dictateth, that we should be content; or that in being discontented we behave our selves very unbecomingly and unworthily, are very unjust, very ingrateful, and very foolish toward him.

1. Equity doth exact this duty of us, and in performing it we act justly toward God, both admitting his due right, and acknowledging his good exercise thereof; That saying in the Gospel, *Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own?* is a most evident maxime of equity; it is therefore the natural right, and prerogative of God (as the Creator and Preserver, and consequently the absolute Lord, Owner and Governour of all things) to assign his station, and allot his portion to every person, as he judgeth good and convenient; it is most just that inviolably he should enjoy this right; He being also infinitely wise and good, it is likewise most just to acknowledge that he doth perfectly well manage this right; Now by contentful submission to God's disposal of things, we do worthily express our due regard to both these, avowing his right, and approving his exercise thereof; but by discontent and regret at what happeneth, we do in effect injure God in both those respects, disavowing his right, and impeaching his management. We do thereby so renounce his right, as (so far as conceit and wish do reach) to invade it, and usurp it to our selves: signifying, that in our opinion things ought not to be ordered according to his judgment and pleasure, but after our fancy and humour; we claim to our selves the priviledge of controlling his estate, and dispensing his goods, so as to be our own carvers, and to assume to our selves so much as we think good; we imply, that, if we were able, we would extort the power out of his hands, and manage it our selves, modelling the World according to our conceits and desires.

We do also (since we cannot but perceive the other attempt of dispossessing God to be frivolous and fruitless) in effect charge God with mis-demeanour, with iniquity or infirmity in his distribution and disposal of things; intimating, that in our opinion he doth not order them so justly, or so wisely as might be (not so well as we in our Wisdom and Justice should order them) for did we conceive them managed for the best, we could not but judge it most unreasonable to be aggrieved, or to complain: so heinously insolent, and unjust are we in being discontent. In earnest, Which is most equal, that God should have his Will, or we? For shame we shall say, God: Why then do we not contentedly let him have it?

'Tis indeed, if we consider it, the highest piece of injustice that we can be guilty of, exceeding that which we commit in any other sort of disobedience. For as in any State seditious Mutinying is the greatest crime, as most directly violating the Majesty, and subverting the authority of the Prince; so in the World, none may be supposed more to offend and wrong its Sovereign Governour, than such malecontents, who dislike and blame his proceedings: Even a *Heathen* could teach us, that it is our duty to *subject our mind to him that administred all things, as good Citizens to the Law of the Common-wealth*; if we do not we are rebellious and seditious, which is the highest pitch of injustice toward our most gracious Sovereign.

Again, there can be no greater injury, or affront offered to God, than to *give him the lie*, by questioning his veracity or fidelity; this discontent plainly doth involve: for God hath expressly declared himself ready upon all occasions to do us good; he hath promised to *care for us*, and *never to forsake us*, or leave us destitute; which Word of his if we did not distrust, and take him to be unfaithful, we could not be discontent: As no man is displeased with his condition, or suspicious of want, who knoweth that he hath abundant supply of all that

1 Sam. 3. 18.

Matt. 20. 17.

Multos inveni
aquos adversus
homines, adver-
sus Deos nemi-
nem. Sen. Ep.

93.

Τὸ αὐτὸ γὰρ ἔστιν ὑποτάσσειν τὸν δι-
οικῶντι τὰ ὅλα, καθὼς περ οἱ ἀγαθοὶ πο-
λίται τῷ νόμῳ τῆς πόλεως. Arr. 1. 12.

1 John 5. 10.

Matt. 6. 25.

36.

Heb. 13. 5.

that he can need in a sure place; that he hath a person most able, most willing, most faithful engaged to succour him; so did we believe God to be true, who hath promised to help us, we could not be discontented for fear of any want.

We must at least in so doing, suspect God to be deficient in goodness toward us, or unwilling to help us, or we must apprehend him impotent, and unable to perform what he would, and what he hath promised, for us (like those Infidels, who said, *Can God furnish a table in the wilderness? Can he give bread also, can he provide flesh for his people?*) which conceits of God are also very unworthy, and injurious to him.

Psal. 78. 19.

2. Gratitude requireth of us this duty; for we having no right or title to any thing; all that we have coming from God's pure bounty; he having upon us all (whatever our condition comparatively is, or may seem to us) freely conferred

Iniquus est qui muneris sui ar'itrium danti non relinquit avidus qui non lucri loco habet quod accipit, sed damni quod reddidit, &c. Sen. ad Polyb. 29.

many great benefits, common to all men among us (our being, life, reason, capacity of eternal happiness, manifold spiritual blessings, incomparably precious and excellent) we in all reason should be thankful for these, without craving more, or complaining for the want of other things. Whereas also all events (how cross soever to our sensual conceits, or appetites) are by God designed, and dispensed for our good, gratitude requireth, that we should thank God for them, and not murmur against them.

Surely if instead of rendring God thanks for all the excellent gifts which he most liberally (without any previous obligation to us, or desert of ours) hath bestowed on us, and continueth to bestow, we fret, and quarrel, that he doth not in smaller matters seem to cocker us, we are extremely ingrateful, and disingenuous toward him: If any great Person here should freely bestow on us gifts of huge value (high preferment, or much Wealth) but with good reason, as we might presume, should withhold from us some trifle, that we fancy or dote upon, should we not be very unworthy, if we should take it ill and be angry with him for that cause? The case is plainly the same; God hath in the frankest manner bestowed on us innumerable and inestimable goods, in comparison whereto any comfort or convenience of our state here is very trivial and despicable; Are we not therefore very ingrateful, if we heinously resent the want of any such things; if upon any such account we disgust his Providence? Do we not deal, beyond all expression, unworthily with God, in so much undervaluing the goods which he hath given us, or doth offer us, and hath put in our reach? He hath made us capable of the greatest goods imaginable, and faithfully upon easie terms proffereth them to us; he even tendereth himself (himself, the immense and all-comprehending good, the fountain of all joy and bliss) to be fully enjoyed by us; his wisdom he offereth to instruct and guide us, his power to protect and guard us, his fulness to supply us, his goodness to comfort us; he offereth his love and favour to us, in having which we virtually and in effect have all things; becoming thereby, in the highest degree, rich and honourable and happy; And is it not then outrageous unworthiness to prize any other thing (any petty accommodation of this transitory life, any pitiful toy here) so much, as to be displeased for the want thereof; as if all this were not enough to satisfy our needs, or satiate our desires; as if notwithstanding all these immense effusions (yea as it were profusions) of bounty upon us, we could be indigent or unhappy? Shall we (to use that holy and most ingenuous consideration of Job) receive so much good from the bountiful hand of God, and shall we not contentedly receive, or bear so small evils from him? Evils indeed in name, and to gross sense, but

Job. 1. 10.

Εὐχαριστῶ σοι πάτερ, ὅτι πάντα τὰ ὅσα ὦν ἀνθρώπων, ὅτι ἀκοντὰς ἡμᾶς δι' ποιεῖς, &c. said Philagrius in a grievous disease. Naz. Ep. 66.

Ἐπειδὴν τὸ μὴ πάχειν ἐκέχω, τὸ τοῦ γὰρ πάχειν παρακερδαίνω, τὸ φέρειν, καὶ τὸ δ' χαλεπεῖν. Naz. de se. Ep. 63.

not so in reality, not so in effect, at least not so in God's design; but rather things very convenient and profitable for us; which is another aggravation of our ingratitude; for,

Are we not also very ingrateful in misapprehending, and disliking that, which God doeth out of very gracious intentions toward us; in loathing his fatherly and friendly dispensations; the fatherly chastisements and friendly disciplines, which he unwillingly is forced (is I say forced by his own great love, and by our pressing needs) to inflict or impose upon us? Surely our ill opinion of or despising (as the

the *wise-Man* calleth it) these unpleasant blessings is no small fault; Neither Prov. 3. 11. will our not discerning (out of affected dulness, and stupid pravity not discerning) the wisdom of God's methods, and the wholesomeness of the means he useth to better us, excuse us from foul ingratitude.

3. Again, upon many accounts, reason farther dictateth in respect to God, that we should be content: because it is most reasonable to acquiesce in God's choice of our state, he being infinitely more wise than we, and infinitely better understanding what is good for us than we can do: because he is well affected to us, and loveth us more than we do ourselves; because he hath a just right, and irresistible power to dispose of us, the which (whatever we can do, however we resent it) he will effectually make use of, whence it is extremely foolish to be discontent: foolish it is to be dissatisfied with the results of his Wisdom, adhering to our vain apprehensions, foolish to distrust his goodness in compliance with our fond self-love; foolish to contest his unquestionable right and uncontrollable power, having nothing but meer impotency to oppose against them; no less than downright madness it is to fret and fume at that which we can no wise help, to bark at that which lodgeth in heaven so far high above us, to sollicit deaf necessity with our ineffectual Wailings; for if we think, that our displeasure will affect God, that our complaints will incline him to alter our condition, or comply with our wishes, we do conceit vainly, and without any ground; sooner may we, by our imagination, stop the Tides of the Sea, or turn the Streams of Rivers backward; sooner, by our cries, may we stay the Sun, and change all the courses of the Stars, than by our passionate resentments or moanful clamours we can check the current of affairs, or alter that state of things, which is by God's high decree established: discontented behaviour will rather fasten our condition, or remove it into a worse place; as it highly doth offend God, and increaseth our guilt, so it moveth God to continue, and to augment our evils. Thus lifting up our Eyes to heaven, and considering the reference our disposition and demeanour hath to God, will induce us to bear our case contentedly.

II. Again, Reflecting upon our selves, we may observe much reason to be content with our state; in whatever capacity we look upon our selves, it in reason becometh us, we in duty are obliged to be so. Lam. 3. 39.

As men and creatures we naturally are indigent and impotent; we have no just claim to any thing, nor any possession maintainable by our power; all that we have, or can have, cometh from most pure courtesie and bounty; wherefore how little soever is allowed us, we have no wrong done us, nor can we justly complain thereat: Such beggars as we are must not pretend to be chusers; if any thing be given us we may be glad, we should be thankful. It is for those who have a right and a power to maintain it, to resent and expostulate, if their due be withheld; but for us that never had any thing, which we could call our own; that have no power to get or keep any thing; for us that came into the World naked and defenceless, that live here in continual, absolute and arbitrary dependance for all our livelihood and subsistence, to contest with him that maintaineth us, or to complain of his dealing, is ridiculously absurd and vain.

Upon a moral account we have less reason to challenge ought, or to complain of any thing; for we deserve nothing but evil: If we rightly esteem and value ourselves, any thing will seem good enough for us, any condition will appear better than we deserve: duly examining the imperfections and infirmities of our nature, the disorder and depravedness of our hearts, the demeanours and enormities of our lives, we cannot but apprehend, that we are even unworthy of the crumbs which fall from our master's table; we cannot but acknowledge with the good Patriarch, that we are less than the least of God's mercies. Gen. 32. 10. Considering our natural unworthiness, we shall see that we deserve not so much as those common benefits which all men enjoy, and without which we cannot subsist; so that in regard to them we shall be ready to acknowledge with the Psalmist, Lord what is man that thou takest knowledge of him, or the Son of man, that thou makest account of him? Psal. 44. 31. Job. 7. 27. Trying our hearts and examining our ways, we shall soon discover it to be abundant mercy, that we

are not utterly depriv'd of all good things, stript of all comforts, yea dispossessed of our very being and life it self; that we are obliged to acknowledge with those in the *Lamentations*, *It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not.* Were we far better than we are, yet it would not become us to contest with him, to whose disposal and judgment we are subject; as *Job* teacheth us: *Behold* (saith he) *God taketh away, who can hinder him, who will say unto him, what doest thou? If he will not withdraw his anger, the proud * helpers do stoop under him; how much less shall I answer him, and chuse out my words to reason with him; whom though I were righteous, I would not answer, but I would make supplication to my judge; but for us, men so unrighteous and guilty, to debate with, to question the Proceedings of our Judge, it is much more unseemly.*

Nothing can be more absurd, than for Men so deeply indebted, than for sinners so very obnoxious to Wrath, to be aggrieved in any state: Shall we, who are conscious to our selves of so many great sins against our God; who by wilful transgressions, or slothful neglects, have so much affronted and offended him; who have so little requited his love, and so much abused his patience; who have born so little fruit, and render'd him so little service, shall we be angry that our humour is not pleased in all things? Shall we affect to swim in plenty, to wallow in pleasure, to bask our selves in ease; to be fed with dainties, to be gaily cloathed, to flourish in a brave and splendid condition, to be worshipped and honoured, who deserve not the meanest competence, or lowest respect, to whom it is a great favour that we are permitted to subsist, whom strict justice would often have cast into utter misery and discomfort? It is not surely for such persons to be dissatisfied with any thing in this World, but to bless God's exceeding mercy, that they abide there on this side of the bottomless pit; 'tis their part, with most submissive patience, to bear whatever is inflicted on them, humbly saying with him in the *Prophet*, *I will bear the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against him.* Seeing, whatever our crosses or sufferings be, we cannot but confess to God with those in *Ezra*, *Thou hast punished us less than our iniquities deserve;* being gainers upon the matter, having so much of our debt remitted in effect, being in comparison to what was due to us very tolerably, yea very favourably dealt with, Why should we be dissatisfied? If in such cases men should deal so favourably with us, we should be much pleased, and ready to thank them; Why then should we take it ill of God, when he even in his hardest proceedings against us, expresseth so much indulgence and mercy?

If we must be displeased, and lust to complain, we have reason much rather to accuse our selves, than to exclaim at Providence, to bewail our sins, than to deplore our fortune: for our evils are not indeed so much the voluntary Works of God, who *doth not afflict willingly, or grieve the children of men*, as the natural products of our sin, which we do willfully commit: It is (as the *Prophet* speaketh) *our sins that withhold good things from us; and bring evil things upon us: Fools, because of their transgression, and because of their iniquities, are afflicted.* We make adversity necessary or expedient for us, then we cry out upon it: We labour in Planting, but cannot brook *the fruit of our doings*; we, like prodigals, fling away our estate in wanton profusions, then complain of want; we affect and chuse the causes, but loath, and cannot abide the certain consequences; so fond in our conceits, so perverse are we in our affections: *Wherefore doth the living man complain, for the punishment of his sins?* so well might the *Prophet* demand and expostulate.

We may farther, looking on our selves, consider our selves as servants to God, or rather as slaves, absolutely subject to his disposal; And shall any servant, shall a mere slave presume to chuse his place, or determine his rank in the family? Shall he appoint to himself what office he will discharge, what garb he shall go in, what diet he must have, what he will do, and how he shall be accommodated? Is it not fit that all these things should be left to our Master's discretion and pleasure? it is most reasonable that we should thoroughly acquiesce in his determination: even a *Pagan Philosopher* could teach us, that

that this is reasonable; who thus piously directeth his Speech to God: *For the rest use me to what thou pleasest. I do consent unto thee, and am indifferent. I refuse nothing which seemeth good to thee; lead me whither thou wilt; put on me what garment thou pleasest: Wilt thou have me to be a governour or a private man, to stay at home or to be banished away, to be poor or to be rich? I will, in respect to all these things, apologize for thee with men; thus did Epictetus*

say, and such speech well becometh our relation to God: Servants should be content with their Masters appointments and allowances; they should not only themselves forbear to find fault with, but be ready to maintain his proceedings against any, who shall presume to reprehend or blame them. Especially such servants as we are, who *after we have done all things commanded us, must acknowledge that we are unprofitable servants*; such as can bring no considerable benefit to our Lord, or any-wise advance his state; such as therefore cannot challenge any Wages from him, more than he out of mere favour is pleased to allow: Could we, by our labours, enrich God, or raise him in dignity, or procure delight to him, it might seem congruous that he should answerably reward us; but as he getteth nothing by us, so we cannot require any thing from him: our best services do indeed rather need pardon, than deserve any reward: No man hath lived so well, that he can pretend any thing from God, that he is not indeed much behind-hand in his accounts with God, having received from God far more of benefit than he can return to him in service: No man, without extream presumption and arrogance, can offer to prescribe, in what measure, or what manner God should reward him.

Again, if we consider our selves as the children of God, either by birth or nature, or by adoption and grace, How can we be discontent for any thing? Have we not thence great reason to hope, or rather to be confident, that we shall never want any good thing (necessary or convenient for us) that no great evil shall ever oppress us? For is not God hence by paternal disposition inclined, is he not in a manner, by paternal duty, engaged; in all needful occasions, to supply and succour us? Can we (without great profaneness, and no less folly) surmise, that he, which is so immensely good, will be a bad (an unkind, or a neglectful) Father to us? No: as there is no other Father in goodness comparable to him, so none, in real effects of benignity, can come near him; so our Lord assureth us: *If ye (saith he) being evil, know how to give good things to your children; How much more will your heavenly Father give good things to his children that ask him?*

If we consider our selves as Christians, we have still more reason to practise this duty: As such, we are not only possessed of goods abundantly sufficient to satisfy our desires; we have hopes able to raise our minds above the sense of all present things; we have entertainments that ever may divert our minds, and fill our hearts with comfort; but we have also an assurance of competent supplies of temporal goods; for, *Godliness is profitable to all things, having the promise both of the present life, and of that which is to come*: and, *If we seek first the Kingdom of heaven, and its righteousness, all these things shall be added unto us*. It is indeed strangely unhandsome for a Christian ever to droop, or to be disconsolate; for a friend of God, and an heir of heaven to think he wants any thing, or fear that he shall ever want: for him, whose treasure and heart are above, to be so concerned with any thing here, as deeply to resent it.

Again, if we reflect upon our selves as rational men, How for shame can we be discontent? Do we not therein much disparage that excellent perfection of our nature? Is it not the proper work of reason to prevent things hurtful or offensive to us, when that may be done; to remove them, if they are removable; if neither of these can be compassed, to allay and mitigate them; so that we may be able well to support them? Is it not its principal use to drive away those fond conceits, and to quell those troublesome passions, which create, or foment disquiet, and displeasure to us? If it cannot do this, What doth it signify? To what purpose have we it? Is not our condition really worse than that of brute beasts, if reason serveth only to discern the causes of trouble, but

Χρῶ μοι λοιπὸν εἰς ὃ ἂν θέλῃς. Ὁ-
μογνωμονᾷ σοι, ἵσος ἐμί. Οὐδὲν πα-
ραιτῶμαι ἢ σοι δοκούντων. Ὅτε θέλῃς
ἄγε. ὡς θέλῃς ἐδῆτα ποίηδες Ἀρχεῖν
με θέλῃς, ἰδοτεύειν, μένειν. φεύγειν, πέ-
νειν, πλετεῖν; ἐγὼ σοι ὑπὲρ πάντων
τάτων πρὸς τὸς ἀνθρώπους ἀπολογήσο-
μαι. Αἰγ. 2. 16.

Luc. 17. 10.

Matt. 7. 11.

1 Tim. 4. 8.

Matt. 6. 33.

cannot enable to bear it? All the reasons we have produced, and all that we shall produce against discontent, will, if we are reasonable men, and reason availeth any thing, have this effect upon us.

Wherefore considering our selves, our capacities, our relations, our actions, it is most reasonable to be content with our condition, and with whatever doth befall us.

S E R M O N VII.

Of CONTENTMENT.

P H I L. iv. 11.

I have learned in whatever state I am, therewith to be content.

III. **F**Arther, if we consider our condition, (be it what it will, how poor, how mean, how despicable and forlorn soever) we can have from it no reasonable ground of discontent.

I. Our condition in this World cannot (if rightly estimated, and well managed) be extremely bad, or sorrowful; nothing here can occur insupportable, or very grievous in itself; we cannot, if we please, want any thing considerable, and the defect whereof may not be supplied, or supported by far better enjoyments. If we have high opinions of some things, as very excellent, or very needful for us, it's no wonder, if we do want them, that our condition is unpleasant to us; if we take other things for huge evils, then, if they be incumbent on us, we can hardly scape being displeased; but if we thoroughly look through such things, and scan them exactly, valuing them, not according to fallacious impressions of sense, or illusive dreamings of fancy, but according to sound dictates of reason, we may find, that neither absence of the former, nor the presence of the latter doth make our condition much worse, or render our case deplorable.

We are, for instance, poor: that condition rightly weighed, is not so very sad: for what is poverty? what but the absence of a few superfluous things, which please wanton fancy rather than answer need; without which nature is

Tert. de Pat.
7.
Τὰ δ' ἀργυρώματα δὲν ἡτε πορφύρα
Εἰς τὰς τετραγὰς χρησιμὴ ἐκ αἰς ἡ
βίον. Socrat.

Vid. Plut. in
Arist.

grain, to keep no retinue, to have few friends, and not one flatterer? and what great harm in this? It is a state, which hath its no small conveniences and comforts, its happy fruits and consequences; which freeth us from many

Si vis vacare animo, aut pauper sis oportet, aut pauperi similis.

Multis ad Philosophandum obstitere divitiæ; paupertas expedita est, securus est.

Sen. Ep. 17.

Sapius pauper, & fidelius ridet. Sen. Ep. 80.

cares and distractions, from many troubles and crosses, from many encumbrances, many dangers, many temptations, many sore distempers of body and soul, many grievous mischiefs, to which Wealth is exposed; which maintaineth health, industry and sobriety; disposeth us to feed heartily, to move nimbly, to sleep sweetly; which preserveth us from luxury, from satiety; from sloth and unwieldiness. It

yieldeth disposition of mind, freedom and leisure to attend the study of truth, the acquist of virtue. It is a state, which many have born with great cheerfulness; many (very wise men) have voluntarily embraced; which is allotted

by

by divine Wisdom to most men; and which the best men often do endure; to which God hath declared an especial regard, which the mouth of truth hath proclaimed happy; which the Son of God hath dignified by his choice, and sanctified by his partaking deeply thereof; and can such a condition be very loathsome, can it reasonably displease us?

Again, thou art, suppose, fallen into disgrace, or from honour and credit art depressed into a state of contempt and infamy? this also rightly prized is no such wretchedness; for what doth this import? what, but a change of opinion in giddy men, which thou dost not feel, which thou art not concerned in, if thou pleasest; which thou never hadst reason much to regard, or at all to rely upon? what is thy loss therein? it is the breaking of a bubble, the sinking of a Wave, the changing of a Wind, the cracking of a thing most brittle, the flipping away of a thing most fugacious and slippery; What is honour and fame, but thought, and what more flitting, what sooner gone away than a thought? and why art thou displeased at the loss of a thing so very slender and flimie? If thou didst know its nature, thou canst not be disappointed; if thou didst not, it was worth thy while to be thus informed by experience, that thou maiest not any more regard it. Is the contempt, thou hast incurred, from thy fault? bear the consequence thereof patiently, and do thy best by removing the cause to reverse the effect: is it undeserved and causeless? be satisfied in thy innocence, and be glad that thou art above the folly and injustice of those, who condemn thee. Let thy affections rather be employed in pity of theirs, than in displeasure for thy own case. Did (let me ask thee again) the good opinion of men please thee? that pleasure was fond and vain, and it is well thou art rid of it. Did it not much affect thee? why then dost thou much grieve at the loss thereof? Is not also thy fortune in this kind the same with that of the best men? have not those who have deserved most honour, been exposed to most contempt? *But now (Job could say) they that are younger than I have me in derision, — they abhor me, they flee far from me, and spare not to spit in my face.* And, *I am, (could that great and good King say) a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people; All they that see me, laugh me to scorn; they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, — and, we are defamed, we are reviled, we are made as the filth of the world, and the off-scouring of all things unto this day,* could the holy Apostles say; and *He is despised and rejected of men, — he was despised and we esteemed him not,* was said of our Lord himself: and can this condition then in just esteem be so very pitiful or grievous?

But thou art perhaps troubled because thou art wrongfully censured, odiously traduced and defamed, abused by slander, or by detraction; which asperseth thee with things whereof thou art no-wise guilty, or representeth thee in a character unworthy of thee; Be it so; what then; why doth this so much affect thee?

Exempl. Jeremix. Chrysoft. ad Olymp. 16.

Gratias ago Deo meo, quia dignus sum quem mundus oderit. Hier. Ep. 39. (ad Acellam.)

Is not every man subject to these things? are not the greatest men, are not the wisest men, are not the best men liable to the same? yea chiefly liable, excellency being the special mark of envy and obloquy? can any good men escape free of them among so many bad men, whose doings as goodness doth reproach, so it provoketh malignity? Canst thou imagine to pass thy days in so unjust and spiteful a World without incurring such bad usage? can so many vain, so many bold, so many lawless tongues be tied up, or kept within compass of truth, or equity? Wilt thou suffer it to be in the power of any man at his pleasure so easily to discompose and vex thee? because he will be bad, shalt thou be miserable? why dost thou not rather please thy self in the conscience of thy endeavouring to deserve and do well; in thy innocence, and clearness from the blame which they impose on thee; in thy having given no cause of such offence and outrage? why dost thou not rather pity their unworthiness and unhappiness, who stoop to so mean and base practices, than fret at them, as bad to thee? they do themselves far more mischief, than they can do thee.

And why dost thou not consider, that indeed thou art guilty of many faults, and full of real imperfections, so that no man can easily derogate from thee more than thou deservest: he may indeed tax thee unjustly, he may miss in the

*Psal. 10. 14.
35. 10. 68. 10.
69. 33. 72. 4.
13. 140. 12.
46 7. 147. 2.
Luk. 6. 20.
Jam. 2. 5.
Ila. 66. 2.*

Job 30. 1, 10.

Psal. 22. 6, 7.

1 Cor. 4. 12.

Ila. 53. 3.

*Ἀλλ' οἱ μὲν
ἠδίκησαν,
ἐγὼ δὲ οὐκ
ἠδίκημαι.
Theod. Ep. 80.*

the particulars of his charge, he may discover groundless contempt, and ill-will toward thee; but thou knowest thy self to be a grievous sinner, and it is just that thou shouldst be reproached, (God, for thy humiliation, or thy correction, may have ordered him, as *David* said he might have ordered *Shimei*, to curse thee) thou hast therefore more need to be humble in reflection on thy self, than to swell with disdain in regard to his injury.

Theodor. Ep.
83.

Thou shouldst improve this dealing, and make it wholesome to thee, by taking occasion thence to correct thy real faults, and endeavouring to become truly more worthy; that so thy conscience may be a firm bulwark against all detraction and obloquy: In fine, satisfy thy self by committing thy soul with patience in well-doing unto thy Judge, who assuredly will do thee right, will protect thy reputation, and clear thy innocence: his judgment is only worth regarding, be little concerned with any other.

Again, Being disappointed and crossed in the success of their projects, or undertakings, is wont to put men, as they conceive, into a woful case: but why so? why (let me ask thee, who art discontented upon this score) didst thou build much expectation upon uncertainties? didst thou not foresee a possibility, that thy design might miscarry, and if so, why art thou not prepared to receive what happeneth? was it not an adventure, why then art thou troubled with thy chance? Is he not a silly gamester, that will fret and fume at a bad cast, or at the loss of a game? Didst thou refer the business to God's disposal and arbitrement? if not, thou deservedst to be crossed, and rather confess thy fault, than complain of thy fortune; if thou didst so, then be consistent with thy self, and acquiesce in his determination: In fine, what is thy loss, is't of thy care and pain? would it have been much better, that thou hadst been careless or idle? but hast thou not in lieu of them got some Wisdom and Experience? hast thou not (if thy attempt was reasonable and worthy) exercised thy wit, thy courage, thy industry? hast thou not (by thy defeat) got an opportunity to express equanimity and patience? if thou so improvest thy disappointment, thou art a gainer by thy loss, thou dost more than conquer by thy defeat: however since the gain, the credit, the preferment thou didst aim at and hast missed, are things in themselves of no great value, and such as thou maiest well live without, as other good men have done, thou canst not have much reason to be displeased upon this account, or to reckon thy condition disastrous

Psal. 55. 7.

*Fam sibi panas
dedit qui pecca-
vit. Ser. de Gr.
2. 30.*

But friends, will some say, have been unkind, have been ungrateful, have been fickle and false, have neglected, have deserted, have betrayed me; *It was not an enemy, that reproached me, then I could have born it, &c.* this is indeed commonly most grievous; yet being scanned will not render a man's condition so lamentable: for, such misbehaviour of friends is more their calamity than ours: the loss of bad friends is no damage, but an advantage; 'tis but the loss of a mischief, and a trouble: the fewer we come to have of such, the more time we save, the less trouble we meet with, the greater security we enjoy. The kindness we have shewed, the obligations we have put on such, are not quite lost, they will bring the rewards due to humanity and fidelity; it will yield satisfaction to us, that however we have been kind and faithful to them. The fidelity of remaining true friends may satisfy us; however if all other friendship should fail, there is one remains, worth millions of other friends, who can never prove unfaithful, or inconstant, who never will be unmindful of us, or deficient in kindness toward us.

Vid. Sen. Ep.
63.

The death of friends doth, it may be, oppress thee with sorrow.

But canst thou lose thy best friend; canst thou lose the presence, the conversation, the protection, the advice, the succour of God? is he not immortal, is he not immutable, is he not inseparable from thee? canst thou be destitute of friends, whilst he stands by thee? is it not an affront, an heinous indignity to him, to behave thy self, as if thy happiness, thy welfare, thy comfort had dependance on any other but him?

Οὐ γὰρ ἀπέθανεν ὁ πάντα ἄεις ὁ
καὶν ὁ ἀνὴρ, καὶ τὴν τῶ Κρείττονος
ἀλλὰ καθεύδει ὑπὸν τῶ συνήδου
μακρότερον. Theod. Ep. 68.

Ἀποδημίαν τοίνυν παρὰ καλῶ μακρόν
τὴν τελευτῶν ἔσθ. Theod. Ep. 16.

Vid. Greg.
Naz. Ep. 202.

is it not a great fault to be unwilling to part with any thing, when he calleth for it?

Neither

• Neither is it a loss of thy friend, but a separation for a small time ; he's only parted from thee as taking a little journey, or going for a small time to repose ; within a while we shall be sure to meet again, and joyfully to congratulate, if we are fit, in a better place, and more happy state ; *præmissimus, non amissimus* ; we have sent him thither before, not quite lost him from us.

Thy friend, if he be a good man (and in such friendships only we can have true satisfaction) is himself in no bad condition and doth not want thee ; thou canst not therefore reasonably grieve for him ; and to grieve only for thy self is perverse selfishness and fondness.

But thou hast lost a great comfort of thy life, and advantage to thy affairs here ? is it truly so ? is it indeed an irreparable loss, even secluding the consideration of God, whose friendship repaireth all possible loss ? what is it, I pray, that was pleasant, convenient, or useful to thee in thy friend, which may not in good measure be supplied here ? was it a sense of hearty good-will, was it a sweet freedom of conversation, was it sound advice or kind assistance in thy affairs ? and mayst thou not find those left, which are alike able, and willing to minister those benefits ? may not the same means, which knit him to thee, conciliate others also to be thy friends ? he did not alone surely possess all the good-nature, all the fidelity, all the Wisdom in the World, nor hath carried them all away with him ? other friends therefore thou mayst find to supply his room : all good men will be ready, if thou art good, to be thy friends, they will heartily love thee ; they will be ready to cheer thee with their sweet and wholesome society, to yield thee their best counsel and help upon any occasion : Is it not therefore a fond and unaccountable affection to a kind of personality, rather than want of a real convenience that disturbeth thee ?

In fine, the same reasons, which in any other loss may comfort us, should do it also in this : neither a friend nor any other good thing we can enjoy is under any security of not soon losing it ; our welfare is not annexed to one man no more than to any other inferior thing ; this is the condition of all good things here to be transient and separable from us ; and accordingly we should be affected toward them.

Fragile fractum est, mortale mortuum est.

But farther, it perhaps displeaseth us, that the course of the World doeth not go right, or according to our mind ; that Justice is not well dispensed, that virtue is under hatches, that worth is not considered, that Industry is not rewarded, that innocence and modesty are trampled upon ; that favour, partiality, corruption, flattery, craft, impudence do carry all before them ; devouring all the encouragement due to honest industry : This may be observed, but why should it displease ? art thou guilty of contributing to this ? then mend ; if not, then bear ; especially seeing thou canst not help it ; for so it hath always been, and ever will be in the World, that things never have gone there as the wisest judge, or the best men desire : there have never been good men enough to sway the World, nor will the few good men that are, be so active in promoting publick good, as bad are in driving on their private designs ; doth not this course of things necessarily spring from the nature of men, which therefore we should no more be vexed at, than for that a Serpent hath poison, or that a Wasp hath a sting ? we cannot wonder at it, why then should we be strangely affected by it ? could any man ever have been pleased, if this were a sufficient cause of displeasure ? However the World goes, we may yet make a tolerable shift, God is engaged competently to provide for us ; that should satisfy us. God observeth these things no less than we, and he can easily hinder them, yet he thinketh good to suffer them ; and shall not we do so likewise ? there is in fine appointed a judgment hereafter, when all these things shall be redressed and set streight ; when justice and virtue shall triumph, when integrity and industry shall find their due recompence ; 'tis but a moment to that time, and till then we may rest satisfied.

Thus if we do survey and rightly state things, which cause discontent, and seem to render our condition hard and sad, we shall find, that not from the things,

Cur doles si, periisse non credis ? cur impatenter feras subductum interim quem credis reversurum ? profectio est quam putas mortem. Tert. de Pat. 9. Sen. Ep. 63.

Impatientia in ejusmodi & spei nostra male ominatur, & fidem prævaricatur, &c. Tert. ibid.

Πῶς τὸ ἄγαπῆς ἀγαθόν, ἐαυτὸς τὰ ῥέω δὲ ἰδόντα τῷ πλεονείῳ διατρέμει τὰ πρὸς αὐτὸς ἐξου; Naz. Or. 19.

vid. Sen. Ep.

things, but from our selves all the mischief proceeds : We by our imagination give to the lightest things a Weight, and swell the smallest things into a vast bulk ; we fancy them very frightful and doleful, then we tremble and grieve at them. Mere names (the names of poverty, of disgrace, of defeat) do scare us, without consulting reason, and considering how little terrible the things are themselves. We follow silly prejudices, judging that highly good, which the vulgar admire, that very evil, which the weakest sort of men are wont to complain of ; hence so commonly doth our case seem grievous. But in truth there is no condition so bad, but if we manage it well and wisely, if we bend our mind to comply with it, if we moderate our passions about the accidents thereof, if we vigilantly embrace and enjoy the advantages thereof, may not be easily supportable, yea prove very comfortable to us ; it is our fond conceits, our froward humours, our perverse behaviours, which do create the trouble, which seemeth adherent to any condition, and embittereth every state ; which from any slight occasion doth create vexation, and turneth every event into disaster.

— usque adeo nulla est, sincera voluptas,
Sollicitique aliquid laus intervenit —
Ovid.

2. As there is no condition here perfectly and purely good (not deficient in some conveniencies, not blended with some troubles) so there is none so thoroughly bad, that it hath not somewhat convenient and comfortable therein ; seldom or never do forsake a man at once, or all mischiefs together assail him ; somewhat usually abideth, which well improved, or wisely enjoyed, may satisfy a Man, yea, render his estate comparable to theirs, who to vulgar eyes appear to be in the best condition : there is in every condition somewhat of good compensating for its evils, and reducing it to a balance with other more plausible states. We are, suppose

Affuescendum conditioni suae ; & quam minimum de illa querendum. & quicquid habet circa se commodi apprehendendum est : nihil tam acerbum est, ex quo non aquus animus solatium inveniat. Sen. de Tranq. ap. cap. 10.

again, in poverty, (that instance I propound usually, as the most ordinary ground of discontent) but have we therewith good health ? then most rich men may envy us, and reasonably we should not exchange our state with many crazy Princes : have we therewith our liberty ? that is an inestimable good which often-times the greatest Men have wanted, and would have purchased with heaps of gold : have we therein a quiet mind, and a free use of our time ? It is that, which wisest men have prized above any Wealth, and which the chief men of the world would be glad to taste of : have we a clear reputation ? we have then the best good that any Wealth can yield, we have more than many can obtain in the most splendid fortune : have we any friends sticking to us ? that is more than the richest persons can assure themselves of, to whom it is near impossible to distinguish the friends of their persons from the flatterers of their fortune ; it is a privilege and solace, which Princes are hardly capable to arrive at : have we a bare competency, sufficient to maintain our life ? we thereby keep our appetites in better compass, and our faculties in greater Vigour ; we thence better relish all things ; we in consequence thereof avoid the burthens, the diseases, the vices of sloth and luxury : have we farther (as if we are not very bad, we shall in this case assuredly have, humanity disposing all men thereto) the compassion of men ; is not this somewhat better, than that envy, that ill-will, that obloquy, which usually do attend Wealth and Prosperity ? why then, if our poor estate hath so manifold conveniencies, do we so much distast it ? why do we so dwell and pore on the small inconveniencies we feel under it, over-looking or slighting the benefits we may enjoy thereby ? This indeed ordinarily is our folly and infirmity ; that the want of any little thing, which we fancy or affect, doth hinder us, from satisfaction in all other things ; *One dead fly causeth all our ointment to stink* ; the possession of a Kingdom will not keep us from being *heavy and displeased* (as *Ahab* was) if we cannot acquire a small vineyard near us ; on that one thing our head runs continually, our heart is wholly set, we can think on, we can taste nothing else ; the want of that notwithstanding all our affluence doth pinch us, our dainties thence do prove insipid, our splendours appear dim, every thing but that is a toy unto us : So capriciously, and unaccountably prone are we to discontent.

Pro. 27. 7.

Ecclef. 10. 1.

1 Kings 21. 1.

3. Is our condition (let me ask again) so extremely bad, that it cannot be much worse ? Are we sunk to the bottom of all calamity ? No surely ; God's Provi-

Providence will not suffer, the state of things here can never admit that to be: here are succours always ready against extremities; our own Wit and Industry, the help of relations or friends, the natural pity and charity of our neighbours will preserve us from them; especially persons in any measure innocent can never come near them; there will therefore never fail some good matter of content in what remains; a few good things, well improved, may greatly solace us; but however, let us imagine our case to be the worst that can be; that a confluence of all temporal mischiefs and wants hath arrived, that we are utterly bereaved of all the comforts this World afforded; that we are stripped of all our Wealth, quite sunk in our reputation, deserted of every friend, deprived of our health and our liberty; that all the losses, all the disgraces, all the pains which poor *Job* sustained, or far more and greater than those, have together seized on us; yet we cannot have sufficient reason to be discontent; for that nevertheless we have goods left to us in our hands, or within our reach, far surpassing all those goods we have lost, much outweighing the evils we do undergo: When the World hath done its worst, we remain Masters of things incomparably better than it, and all it containeth; the possession whereof may (and if we be wise) will abundantly satisfy us. We are Men still, and have our reason left behind, which alone, in worth, exceedeth all the treasures of the World; in well using which, and thereby ordering all things for the best, we become more worthy, and more happy than the most fortunate fool on earth; we may therein find more true satisfaction, than any Wealth, or any Glory here can minister: We may have a good Conscience left, (the sense of having lived well heretofore, or at least a serious resolution to live well hereafter) and that is a *continual feast*, yielding a far more solid and favourable pleasure, than the most ample revenue can afford: We may have hope in God (the author and donor of all good things) and thereby far greater assurance of our convenient subsistence and welfare, than all present possessions can bestow; we have reserved a free access to the Throne of Grace, and thereby a sure means (grounded on God's infallible word and promise) of obtaining whatever is good for us; we have a firm right to innumerable spiritual blessings and privileges, each of them justly valuable beyond whole Worlds of self; we can, in a word (we can if we please) enjoy God's favour, which immensely transcendeth all other enjoyments, which vastly more than countervail the absence of all other things; of this, by applying our selves to the love and service of God, we are infallibly capable; of this no worldly force or fortune can dispossess us; we having this, our condition cannot be poor, contemptible or pitiful; 'tis indeed thereby most rich, glorious and happy: For how can he be poor that hath the Lord of all things always ready to supply him; who hath God (as the *Psalmist* is wont to speak) to be *his portion for ever*? How can he be despicable, that hath the honour to have the Sovereign Majesty of the World for his especial friend? How can he be miserable who enjoyeth the fountain of all happiness, who hath the *light of God's countenance* to cheer him, who hath the consolations of God's holy Spirit to refresh and revive him? What can he want, who, beside his present interest in all the needful effects of God's bountiful love, is an Heir of Heaven and everlasting bliss? Seeing therefore it is in our power to be religious, seeing we may, if we will (God's Grace concurring, which preventeth us to seek, which never is withheld from those who seek it) be good Christians; seeing nothing can hinder us from fearing God, or can separate us from his love, neither can any thing render our condition bad or unhappy, really distressed or needy: O fear the Lord (saith the *Psalmist*) for there is no want to them that seek him: The young Lions (or the rich, as the *LXX* render it) do lack and suffer hunger; but they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing; and, Who so keepeth the commandment, shall feel no evil thing, saith the *Wiseman*; and, The hand of our God is upon all them that seek him, saith the *Prophet*; and, Who is he that shall harm you, (or do ill to you, or make you worse) if ye be followers of that which is good? saith *St. Peter*; and, We know (saith *St. Paul*) that to them who love God, all things cooperate for good; and, Godliness (saith he again) with contentedness is great gain; that is, supposing we have the goods which piety ministereth, although we have nothing more, we are, if we can be content, very well to pass; it is abundantly sufficient for us.

Job, who ἐχέ-
νωσεν αὐτῶν
(τὸ διαβόλῳ)
βελόνην
ἐπ' αὐτὸν κατὰ
τοῦ δόμου
ἐν αὐτῷ, &c.
Chryl ad.
Olymp. 2

Prov. 15. 15.

Psal. 73. 26.
16. 5. 19.
57. 142. 5.

Rom. 8. 39.

Psal. 34. 9.

Πλάστοι ἐπ'
τὸ γέγραπ.
LXX.

Eccles. 8. 5.

Ezra 8. 22.

1 Pet. 3. 13.

Ὁ κακῶσαν.

Rom. 8. 28.

1 Tim. 6. 6.

• Why then, I pray, are we discontent? What do we groan or grieve for? what is it that we do want? Is it the use of reason, is it virtue, is it God's favour? then indeed we have good cause to be displeased; for the want of those things is indeed lamentable; but if we do want them, it is only our selves that we should complain of; for we may have them if we will, and who can help it if we will not? Who, if we shall wilfully deprive our selves of them, will be concerned to mind our complaints? But is it only a lump of trash, or a puff of honour, or a flash of pleasure, that we do need? Is it that we cannot so delicately glut our bellies, or so finely cloath our backs, or so thoroughly sooth our fancies, as we could wish, that we so pitifully moan? Is it being restrained in some respects from the swinge of our humour, it is that we are not so much regarded, or are slighted by some persons, it is that we are crossed in some design, that so discomposeth and discourageth us? then are we fottishly fond and childish in our conceits, and our affections: for proper it is to children, when as they want no solid or substantial goods, to wail for worthless toys or trinkets; 'tis for children, when they have not their will in petty and impertinent matters, to cry and lament; children are much affected with every Word, or little shew that crosseth them: If we were (as St Paul
 1 Cor. 14. 20. chargeth us to be) *perfect men*, if we had manly judgments, and manly affections toward things, we should not so regard or value any of these temporal and transitory things, either good or evil, as by the want of one sort, or by the presence of the other, to be much disturbed; we should, with St Paul,
 2 Cor. 4. 17. style any present evil *τὸ ἐλαφρὸν τὸ θλίψεως*, a *lightness of affliction*: We should with him reckon, *that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glories which shall be revealed to us*: We should with St. Peter greatly
 Rom. 8. 28. rejoyce, *though for a season we are in heaviness, through manifold trials*, or afflictions: We should esteem any condition here very tolerable, yea very good.

4. In truth (if we will not mince the matter, and can bear a truth sounding like a Paradox) usually our condition is then better, when it seemeth worse; then we have most cause to be glad when we are aptest to grieve; then we should be thankful, when we do complain; that it appeareth otherwise to us, it is because in our taxations of things we do ordinarily judge (or rather not judge, but fancy, not hearing or regarding any dictate of reason) like beasts; prizing things merely according to present sense, or shew, not examining their intrinsick natures, or looking forward into their proper fruits and consequences.

Adversity (or a state, wherein we are not furnished with all accommodations grateful to sense or fancy; or wherein somewhat doth cleave to us offensive to those inferiour powers of soul) is the thing which we chiefly loath and abominate; whereas, in true judgment, nothing commonly is more necessary, more wholesome, more useful and beneficial to us; nothing is more needful, or conducive to the health of our soul, and to our real happiness, than it: It is the School of Wisdom, wherein our minds are disciplined and improved in

— *multaque in rebus acerbis
 Acris advertunt animos ad religionem.* Lucret. 3. p. 64.

Καὶ ὅτ' ἴσθ' ὅτι τὸν πειρασμὸν καὶ τὴν θλίψιν ἡ ψυχὴ ἀνίσταται καὶ ἀναζητεῖ τὸν Θεόν· καὶ ὁ Θεὸς ἀποκρίνεται τῇ ψυχῇ καὶ ἐκκαθαρίζει αὐτήν, ὡς χρυσὸν καθαρίζει ὁ πυρρὸς καὶ ὡς σίδηρον καθαρίζει ὁ ἄνθραξ· καὶ ὁ Θεὸς ἐκκαθαρίζει τὴν ψυχὴν ὡς χρυσὸν καθαρίζει ὁ πυρρὸς καὶ ὡς σίδηρον καθαρίζει ὁ ἄνθραξ. Chry. in 2 Cor. Orat. 26.

• Psal. 119. the knowledge of the best things, whence it is termed παιδεία, that is, instructive chastisement; * so David found it, *It is, said he, good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn thy statutes*; and, our Lord himself, *ἐμαυτὸν ἀφ' ὧν ἔπαθον*, *He learned obedience from what he suffered*. It is the Academy wherein virtue is acquired and exercised; so God meant it to his people; *The Lord thy God (saith Moses) led thee this forty years in the wilderness, that he might humble thee, and prove thee*. So the Wiseman saith, *that by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better*; and, *that stripes do cleanse the inward parts of the belly*. And, *It yieldeth, (saith the Apostle) the peaceable fruit of righteousness to them that are exercised thereby*.

It is the furnace of the Soul wherein it is tryed, cleansed and refined from the dross of vain conceits, of perverse humours, of vicious distempers: *When (saith Job) he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold*: and, *Gold (saith the Wise-man) is tried in the fire, and acceptable men in the furnace of * adversity*.

It

Job. 23. 10. (Psal. 66. 10)

Eccles. 2. 5. Sap. 3. 5.

(Ila. 1. 25. 48. 10. Ma'. 3. 23.

Dan. 11. 35.

* Hence πειρασμός (trial) is the usual word signifying it. 1 Pet. 1. 6, &c.

• It is the method whereby God reclaimeth sturdy sinners to goodness, engageth them to seek and serve himself; so of the *Israelites*, the *Prophet* saith, *Isa. 26. 16. Lord in trouble have they visited thee, they poured out a prayer when thy chastening was upon them; so Manasses, when he was in affliction he besought the Lord his God, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his Fathers; so Nebuchadnezzar, after being driven from his Kingdom, his understanding returned unto him, and he blessed the most high, and praised and honoured him that liveth for ever. So David himself, Before, said he, I was afflicted I went astray, but now have I kept thy word.*

It is that whereby God doth prepare men, and doth entitle them to the blessed rewards hereafter: *Our light affliction* (saith *St. Paul) *which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; and, Ye* (saith St. Peter) *greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations, that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, may be found unto praise, and honour, and glory, at the appearing of Jesus Christ.* Such is the nature, such the use, such the fruits of adversity.

It is indeed scarce possible, that without tasting it somewhat deeply, any man should become in good measure either wise or good. He must be very ignorant of himself (of his own temper and inclinations, of the strength and forces of his reason) who hath not met with some rub and crosses to try himself and them with: the greater part of things he must little understand, who hath not experienced the worst part: he cannot skill to wield and govern his passions, who never had them stirred up, and tossed about by cross accidents: he can be no good Pilot in matters of humane life, who hath not for some time sailed in a rough Sea, in foul Weather, among sands and shelves: he could have no good opportunity of employing thoroughly, or improving his wit, his courage, his industry, who hath had no straits to extricate himself from, no difficulties to surmount, no hardships to sustain: The virtues of humility, of patience, of contentedness necessarily must be unknown to him, to whom no disgraces, no wants, no sore pains have arrived, by well enduring which, those virtues are learnt, and planted in the Soul: scarce can he become very charitable, or compassionate to others, who never himself hath felt the smart of affliction, or inconveniences of any distress; for even, as the *Apostle* teacheth us, our Saviour himself was obliged to suffer tribulation, that he thence might become merciful, and disposed to succour the afflicted. (No wonder, if he that liveth in continual prosperity, be a Nabal, churlish and discourteous, insensible of other mens grievances.) And how can he ex-

press much piety or love to God, who is not (in submission to God's Will, and for his sake) put to suffer any thing grievous, or want any thing desirable? When can he employ any great faith or hope in God, who never hath any visible need of succour, or relief from him, who hath other present aids to confide in? How can he purely delight in God, and place his sole felicity in him? How can he thoroughly relish spiritual things, whose affections are taken up by an affluence of other goods, whose appetites are glutted with enjoyment of other delights? What but deprivation of these things can lay open the vanity, the deceitfulness and slipperiness of them? What but crosses and disappointments here can withdraw our minds from a fond admiration, and eager affection towards this World? What but the want of these joys and satisfactions, can drive us to seek our felicity elsewhere? when the deceit of riches possesseth us, How can we judge right of things? when cares about them distract us, How can we think about any thing that is good? when their snares entangle us, and their clogs encumber us, How can we be free and expedite in doing good? when abundance fatneth our hearts, and ease softneth our spirits, and success puffeth up

Ἡ δὲ πόνων ἐπίτασις, μὴ δὲ ἐπι-
τασις ἐστὶ, καὶ ἐρεῖσμα ἀσφαλὲς πρὸς τὸ
μὴ ἐκόντας. καὶ προσεῖν καὶ ὅτι τύπον κατα-
σέλλει, καὶ βαθυμίαν ἀπορρέει, καὶ φρονι-
μωτέρας ποιεῖ καὶ ἀλαβείρους ἐργάζε-
ται. Gr. Chrys. tom. 6. Or. 9.

* 2 Cor. 4. 17.

Heb. 10. 36. ὁπομνήσ ἐχετε χρεῖ-
αν. Gr.

1 Pet. 1. 6. 4. 14.

Nihil infelicius eo, cui nihil unquam eve-
nit adversi, non licuit enim illi se experiri.
Sen. de Provid. 3.

Non fert ullum istum illa felicitas.
Ibid.

Qua latet, inque bonis cessat non cognita
rebus.

Apparet virtus, arguiturque malis.
Ovid. Trist. 4. 3.

Non ignara
mali miseris
succurrere disco.
Æl. 2.

Heb. 2. 17, 18.
+ 15. 16.
1 Sim. 25.
6. 3.

Cum molestia in hujus vite fragilitate
crebrescunt æternam requiem nos desidera-
re compellunt. Mundus quippe iste pericu-
losior est blandus, quam molestus, & magis
cavendus quam se illicet diligi, quam cum
admonet, cogitque contemni. Aug. Ep. 144.

Ardua nam res est opibus non tradere mo-
res. Marr.

Munera ista fortuna pænitentis insidia sunt.
Sen. Ep. 8.

Viscera beneficii. Ib.

Matt. 13. 22.

Tim. 6. 9.

Luc. 10. 41.

Deut. 32. 15.

Rev. 1. 32.

36. 9.

Hof. 13. 6. our minds; when pride, sensuality, stupidity and sloth (the most inseparable
 Psal. 30. 6. adherents to large and prosperous Estates) do continually insinuate themselves
 Jer. 22. 21. into us, what Wisdom, what Virtue are we like to have?
 Amos 6. 1, &c.

Gratulari & gaudere, nos decet dignatione divina castigationis — O servum illum beatum, cujus emendationi Dominus instat; cui dignatur irasci, quem admonendi dissimulatione non decipit. Tert. de Pat. 11.

Ο εμφορτών καὶ μὴ κολλᾷται, πάντων ὄντων ἀδελιώτερον, &c. Chrys. ἀνδρ. 5.

tained under the reign of folly and mischief, that we are not inevitably made fools and beasts. To be disgusted with providence for affliction or poverty, is no other than as if we should be angry with our Physician for administering a purge, or for prescribing abstinence to us; as if we should fret at our Chirurgeon for searching our Wounds, or applying needful corrosives; as if we should complain of the hand which draweth us from a precipice, or pulleth us out of the fire. *Many benefits (saith Seneca) have a sad and rough countenance, as to burn and cut in order to healing.* Such a benefit of God is adversity to us; and as such with a gladsome and thankful mind should we receive it.

Jude 23.
Beneficia multa tristem & asperam frontem habent. quemadmodum urere, & sicare, ut sanes. Sen. de Benef. 5. 20.

Horrorem operis fructus excusat. Tert. Scorp. 5.

Luke 6. 24. Jam. 5. 1. Amos 6. 1, &c.

Let our condition be what it will, we are the same. It doth not change us in our intrinsic worth, or state. It is but as a garment about us, or as weather.

— Ego utrum.

Nave ferar magnā an parvā, ferar unus & idem. Hor. Epist. 2. 3.

If with a diligent observation we consult experience, we shall find, that as many have great cause to bewail, that they have been rich, that they have been blinded and corrupted with prosperity, that they have *received their consolation here*; so many have great reason to be glad, that they have been poor, that they have been disappointed, that they have tasted the bitter cup; it having instructed and corrected them; it having rendered them sober and considerate; industrious and frugal, mindful of God, and devout toward

him: And what we may rejoyce in, when past, why should we not bear contentedly when present? Why should not the expectation of such good fruits satisfy us?

Why should not such a condition, being so plainly better in it self, seem also better unto us? We cannot, if we are reasonable, but approve it in our judgment; Why then are we not fully reconciled unto it in our affection?

S E R M O N VIII.

Of CONTENTMENT.

P H I L. iv. 11.

I have learned in whatever state I am, therewith to be content.

BUT farther; Let our state be, as to quality, what it will, good or bad, joyful or unpleasant, we may yet consider, that it cannot be desperate, it may not be lasting; for there is not any necessary connexion between the present and the future; wherefore, as the present being momentary

mentary and transient, can little trouble us, so the future being unknown; and uncertain, should not dismay us. As no man reasonably can be elevated with confidence in a good state, presuming on its duration, (*Boast not thy self of to-morrow, for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth;*) so no man should be dejected for a bad one, in suspicion that it will abide long; seeing neither (considering the frequent vicissitudes that occur, and the flux nature of all things here) is each of them in it self, stable; and the continuance of each absolutely dependeth on God's arbitrary disposal; and as God often doth overturn prosperity, to humane judgment most firmly grounded, so he most easily can redress the (to appearance) most forlorn adversity; and he, being especially the helper of the helpless, doth frequently perform it: As he poureth contempt upon Princes, and weakeneth the strength of the mighty; so he raiseth the poor out of the dust, and lifteth the needy out of the dunghil: He casteth down the mighty from their seat, and exalteth the humble and meek: He sendeth the rich empty away, and filleth the hungry with good things. He maketh sore, and bindeth up, he woundeth, and his hands make whole.

Multa intervenient quibus vicinum periculum vel prope admodum aut subsistat, aut desinat, aut in alium caput transferat. Sen.

Psal. 72. 12. 107. 9. 10. 4. 106. 9.
Job. 12. 21. Psal. 107. 40.
Isa. 25. 5. Job 5. 11.
Isa. 2. 11. Psal. 18. 27.
Psal. 113. 7. 107. 41.

Job 5. 18.
1 Sam. 2. 7.

Considering therefore the reason of things, and the nature of God, if our state be at present bad or sorrowful, we have more reason to hope for its amendment, than to fear its continuance. If indeed things went on in a fatal track, meerly according to a blind and heedless chance, or a stiff and unalterable necessity; if there were no remedy from God's providence, or support by his grace to be expected (although even then there would be no reason to grieve or complain; grief would be unreasonable because unprofitable, complaint would be vain, because fortune and fate are deaf) yet our infirmity might somewhat excuse that idle proceeding; but since not a Sparrow falleth to the ground, not a hair of our head perisheth; nothing at all passeth otherwise, than by the voluntary disposition of a most wise and gracious God; since he doth always strictly view, and is very sensible of our griefs; yea, doth in a manner sympathize with them (according to those patheticall expressions in the Prophets; *His bowels found, and are troubled, his heart is turned within him; In all their afflictions he was afflicted.*) Since he farther hath by promise obliged himself to care for us, to support, and succour us; we have all reason to hope, yea firmly to believe (if at least we can find in our hearts to hope and to believe) that we shall, as soon as it is good and expedient for us, find relief and ease; we shall have that *seasonable succour*, of which the Apostle to the Hebrews speaketh. • Hope lieth at the bottom of the worst condition that can be; *The poor* (saith Job's friend) *hath hope*; and the rich can have no more; the future being equally close to both; the one can have no greater assurance to keep what he hath; than the other hath to get what he needeth; yea clearly the poor hath the advantage in the case; for God hath more declared, that he will relieve the poor man's want, than that he will preserve the rich man's store: If then we have in every condition a hope present to us, Why do we grieve as those who have no hope? having ever ready the best anchor that can be to rest upon (for in this rolling Sea of humane affairs, there is no firmer anchor than hope) Why do we let our minds be tossed with discontentful solitudes and fears? Why do we not rather (as the Apostle injoineth) *rejoice in hope*, than grieve out of despair? Why do we not as the Prophet adviseth, *hope and wait quietly for the salvation of the Lord*? the effect of so reposing our selves for the future on God's Providence would be perfect content, and peace, according to that of the Prophet, *Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed in thee, because he trusteth in thee*: And that of the wise Man, *A patient man will bear for a time, and afterwards joy shall spring up unto him*.

Ποῦς γὰρ ἐν ἐχθρῶν πάσχει λογισμῶν κεχρημένοις ἰδὲν τῶν ἀνδραπνίων ἀδελφότητος. ἰδὲν δὲ τῶν σαδερῶν ἢ βέλαιον. Eccl. Theod. Ep. 14.

Sperare adversis, tutum secundis, alteram forem bene preparatum petitis. Hor. Carm. 2. 15.

Matt. 10. 29.
Luke 21. 18.

Hos. 11. 8.
Jer. 31. 20.
Isa. 63. 9. 15.
Luc. 12. 29 31.
Heb. 13. 5.
Matt. 6. 33.
Phil. 4. 6.
1 Pet. 5. 7.
Psal. 55. 23.
37. 5.
Heb. 4. 6.
Job. 5. 16.

1 Thess. 4. 13.
Heb. 6. 19.

Rom. 12. 12.
Lam. 3. 26.

Isa. 26. 3.
Eccl. 1. 23.

The truth is, and it seemeth very observable, in order to our purpose, that most discontent ariseth not from the sense of incumbent evil, but from suspicion, or fear of somewhat to come: Although God at present dispenseth a competency of food and rayment, although we are in a tolerable condition, and

and feel no extremity of want or pain, yet not descrying the way of a future provision for us, answerable to our desires, we do trouble our selves; which

Πολλῆς μετρηχίας ὄτιν ὑπὲρ τῶν
ὑστερον συμενησομένων, ἢ μηδ' ὅλως συ-
μενησομένων τινὶ ἀθυμίαν ἢ δὴ καρπὸν
καὶ κέρειδός. Chryl. ad Stagir. 2.

demeanour implyeth great ignorance and infidelity; We think God obliged in kindness, not only to bestow upon us what is needful in its season, but to furnish us with stores, and allow us securities; we must have somewhat in hand, or we cannot trust him for the future; this is that which our

Saviour cautioneth against, as the root of discontent and sign of diffidence;

Matt. 6. 34. *Take no thought for the morrow, for the morrow shall take thought for the things of it self, sufficient to the day is the evil thereof:* An advice

Calamitosus est animus futuri anxius, &
ante miseriam miser.

Ne sis miser ante tempus; cum illa qua
imminentia expariisti, fortasse nunquam ven-
tura sint, certe noudum venerint, &c. S. n.
Ep. 13.

Quod juvat dolori suo occurrere? satis
cito dolebis cum venerit. Ibid.

Quoties incerta erunt maria, tibi fave. lb.

no less pious, than manifestly full of Reason and Wisdom: For what a palpable folly is it to anticipate that evil which we would avoid; then, when we earnestly desire to put off sorrow, to pull it toward us; to feel that mischief which possibly shall never be; to give it a being in our fancy, which it may never have in nature? Could we follow this advice, never resenting evils before they come, never prejudging about future events against God's Providence, and our

own quiet; constantly depending on the divine care for us; not taking false alarms, and trembling at things, which shall never come near us; not being disturbed with panick fears, no discontent could ever seize upon us; for the present is ever supportable; our mind cannot be overwhelmed by the pangs of a transitory moment.

If we need farther encouragement for application of this remedy, we have manifold experiments to assure its vertue: as there are innumerable Promises, that none who hope in God shall be disappointed, so there are many illustrious examples of those, whom God hath in remarkable manner, and wonderful measure relieved from wants and distresses, raising them out of deepest poverty, contempt and worldly wretchedness, into most eminent degrees of Wealth and Prosperity: *Look (saith the Hebrew Sage) into the ancient generations, and see; Who hath trusted in the Lord, and hath been ashamed? Or who hath abiden in his fear, and hath been forsaken? Or who hath invoked him, and he did overlook (or despise) him?* If we look into those generations, we may there find *Joseph* out of slavery, and out of prison, advanced to be the chief Governour of a most flourishing Kingdom; *Moses* from an exile, and a vagrant, made the Redeemer and Commander of a populous Nation: *Job* out of extream poverty and disgrace, restored to be in wealth and honour *twice* greater than the greatest men of the East: *Daniel* out of captivity and persecution, become President of the greatest Monarchy on earth: *David* raised out of great meanness to highest dignity, restored out of extream straits into a most prosperous state; according to those Words of admiration and acknowledgement; *O what great troubles and adversities hast thou shewed me, and yet didst thou turn and refresh me, yea and broughtest me from the deep of the earth again: Thou hast brought me to great honour, and comforted me on every side:* Thus hath God eminently done with divers, thus we may be assured that he will do competently with us, if with the like faith and patience, we do, as they did, rely and wait upon him.

Lam. 3. 25.

Isa. 30. 18. 40.

31. 49. 23.

Psal. 25. 3.

37. 9. 9. 10.

2 Chron. 28. 9.

Ezra 8. 22.

Amos 5. 4.

2 Chron. 15. 2.

Eccle. 2. 10.

Job. 42. 10.

1. 3.

Psal. 71. 18.

69. 29. 18. 36.

6. But farther, imagine or suppose, that our condition (so irksome to us at present) will certainly hold on to the utmost; yet consider also, that it soon will cease, and change of it self; since we are mortal, our evils cannot be perpetual, we cannot long be infested with them.

As it may debase, and embitter all the prosperity in the World, to consider that it is very fading and short-lived, that its splendour is but a blaze, its pleasure but a flash, its joy but as the crackling of thorns; so it should

Eccle. 7. 6.

(Psal. 27. 13.) I had fainted, If I had
not believed to see the goodness of the Lord
in the land of the living.

abate and sweeten any adversity, to remember, that it is passing away, and suddenly will be gone. Put, I say, the worst case that can be, that it were certainly determined,

and we did as certainly know it, that those things which cause our displeasure, should continue through our whole life; yet since our life it self will soon be spun out, and with it all our worldly evils will vanish, Why are we troubled? What is said of our selves must in consequence be truly applied to them;

They

They flee like a shadow, and continue not; they are winds passing and coming not again; they are vapours appearing for a little time, and then vanishing away; they wither like grass, and fade away as a leaf; they may die before us, they cannot out-live us; our life is but a hand breadth; And can then our evils have any vast bulk? Our age is as nothing; And can any crosses therein be then any great matter? How can any thing so very short be very intolerable? It is but ὀλίγον ἄρετι λυπηθέντες, *being (as St. Peter speaketh) a little while yet aggrieved; it is but* μικρὸν ὅσον ὅσον, *a small quantity whatever it be of time, as the Apostle to the Hebrews saith, that we need patience, it is but* τὸ παροῦν ἡμετέρας θλίψεως, *an affliction for a present moment; and therefore as St. Paul intimateth, light and inconsiderable that we are to undergo. We have but a very narrow strait of time to pass over, but we shall land on the firm, and vast continent of eternity; when we shall be freed from all the troublesome agitations, from all the perilous storms, from all the nauseous qualms of this navigation; death (which may be very near, which cannot be far off) is a sure haven from all the tempests of life, a safe refuge from all the persecutions of the World, an infallible medicine of all the diseases of the mind, and of our state: it will enlarge us from all restraints; it will discharge all our debts, it will ease us from all our toils, it will stifle all our cares, it will veil all our disgraces; it will still all our complaints, and bury all our disquiets; it will wipe all tears from our eyes, and banish all sorrow from our hearts: it perfectly will level all conditions, setting the high and low, the rich and poor, the wise and ignorant all together upon even ground; smothering all the pomp and glories, swallowing all the Wealth and Treasures of the World.*

It is therefore but holding out a while, and all our molestation, of its own accord, will expire: time certainly will cure us; but it is better that we should owe that benefit to reason, and let it presently comfort us: It is better by rational consideration, to work content in our selves, using the brevity and frailty of our life as an argument to sustain us in our adversity, than only to find the end thereof as a natural and necessary means of evasion from it.

Serious reflection upon our mortality, is indeed, upon many accounts a powerful antidote against discontent; being apt to extirpate the most radical causes thereof.

Is it because we much admire these worldly things, that we so much grieve for the want of them? this will quell that admiration; For how can we admire them if we consider how in regard to us they are so very transitory, and evanid? How can we deem them much worth the having, when we can for so little time enjoy them, must so very soon quite part from them?

How can we dote on the World, seeing *The World* (as St. John saith) *passeth away, and the desire thereof?*

How can we value any Worldly glory, since *All the glory of men is* (as St. Peter telleth us) *as the flower of the grass; since, (as the Psalmist saith) Man in honour abideth not, but is like the beasts that perish?*

How can we set our heart on riches considering that *Riches are not for ever, nor can* (as the wise Man saith) *deliver from death; that as St. James admonisheth, The rich man fadeth in his ways; that it may be said to any rich man, as it was to him in the Gospel; Thou fool, this night thy life shall be required of thee, and what thou hast prepared to whom shall it fall? How can we fantasie pleasure, seeing it is but* προσωρινὰ ἀπὸλαυσις, *a very temporary fruition; seeing however we do eat, or drink, or play, it followeth, the morrow we shall die.*

How can we even admire any secular Wisdom, and Knowledge, seeing that it is (as the Psalmist telleth us) true of every man, that — *his breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish; particularly it is seen that wise Men die, no otherwise then as the foolish, and brutish person perisheth; that, as Solomon with regret observed; There is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave whither we are going.*

Do we admire the condition of those, who, upon the stage, do appear in the state of Kings, do act the part of wealthy men, do talk gravely and wisely like

ἴσος χάρις ἅπασι, πένησι τε καὶ βασιλεῦσι.
Πάντες ἴσοι ἐνεστέ. Phocyl.

Κρεῖττον —
Ὅ μέλλας πρὸ χρόνου χαλεζέωδός, τὸ πρὸ
χαλεζέωδός πρὸ λόγου. Plut. ad Apoll.

1 Cron. 29.
15.
Psal. 78. 39.
Jam. 4. 14.
Psal. 90. 5.
Ila. 64. 6. 40.
6.
Psal. 39. 5.
Omnia brevia
tolerabilia esse
debent, etiam si
magna. Cic.
Lael.
1 Pet. 1. 6.
Heb. 10. 26,
27.
2 Cor. 4. 17.

1 John 2. 27.
1 Cor. 7. 31.
Eccl. 1. 3. 6.
1 Pet. 2. 24.
Psal. 49. 12.
82. 6.
Prov. 27. 24.
11. 4.

Jam. 1. 11.
Heb. 11. 25.

1 Cor. 15. 52.

Psal. 46. 4.
Psal. 49. 10.
Eccl. 9. 10.
2. 14.

like Judges or Philosophers for an hour or two? If we do not admire those shadows and mockeries of state, Why do we admire any appearances upon this Theatre of the World, which are scarce a whit less deceitful, or more durable than they?

Is it an envious or disdainful regret at the advantages of others before us (of others perhaps that are unworthy and unfit, or that are, as we conceit, no more worthy and capable than our selves) that gnaweth our heart; is it, that such persons are more wealthy, more honourable, in greater favour or repute than we, that vexeth us? the consideration how little time those slender preeminences will last, may (if better remedies want due efficacy) serve toward rooting out that disease; the *Psalmist* doth several times prescribe it; *Fret not thy self* (saith he) *against evil doers, neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity, for they shall soon be cut down like the grass, and wither as the green herb; and* again, *Be not afraid when one is made rich, and when the glory of his house is increased; for when he dyeth he shall carry nothing away, his glory shall not descend after him: and he being fallen into this scurvy distemper, did follow his own prescription, I was* (saith he) *envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked—until I went into the sanctuary of God, then understood I their end; surely thou didst set them in slippery places—How are they brought* into desolation as in a moment? So likewise doth *Solomon* prescribe: *Let not* (saith he) *thine heart envy sinners; Why not? because surely there is an end, and thine expectation shall not be cut off: there will be a close of his undeserved prosperity, and a good success to thy well-grounded hope. So whatever doth breed discontent, the reflection upon our mortal and frail state will be apt to remove it.*

It was that which comforted *Job*, and fortified his patience under so grievous pressures; *All the days of my appointed time* (said he) *I will wait till my change come: He would not be weary while he lived of his afflictions, because the days of man are few, and full of trouble: If they are full of trouble, and that be a fading consideration; yet they are few, and that maketh amends, that is comfortable.*

7. I add, that it is somewhat consolatory to consider, that the worse our condition is here, the better we may hope our future state will be; the more trouble and sorrow we endure, the less of worldly satisfaction we enjoy here, the less punishment we have to fear, the more comfort we may hope to find hereafter; for as it is a woful thing to have received *our portion*, to have enjoyed *our consolation in this life*, so 'tis a happy thing to have undergone our pain here. A Purgatory under-ground is probably a fable; but a Purgatory upon earth hath good foundations. God is wont so to order it, that all men, that especially good men, shall undergo it: for, *What Son is there whom the Father doth not chasten? All that will live godly in Christ Jesus, must suffer persecution.*

8. A like consolation it is to consider, that Wealth and Prosperity are great Talents, for the improvement of which we must render a strict account, so that *to whom much is given, from him much shall be required*; so that they are in effect a burthen; from which poverty includes an exemption; for the less we have, the less we have to do, the less we are responsible for; our burthen is smaller, our account will be more easie.

9. I shall in reference to our condition, and the nature of those things which cause our discontent, but propose one consideration more, or ask one question: What is it that we do want, or wait for? Is it any good we want, which by our care and industry we can procure? Is it any evil that afflicteth us, which by the like means we can evade? If it be so, Why then do we not vigorously apply our selves to the business; why do we not instead of idle vexation, and ineffectual complaints, use the means offered for our relief? Do we like and love trouble? let us then be content to bear it; let us hug it and keep it close; if not, let us employ the forces afforded us by nature, and by occasion, to repel and remove it.

Τῶν μὴ δυνατῶν ἐφ' ἑαυτῶν ἀνδραπο-
δῶδες καὶ ἡλίδιον, ἔστιν, θεωμαχρὶν
ὡς μόνον οἶοντε, πρὶς δόγματι τοῖς
ἑαυτῶν. *Epiet.* 3. 24.

— Περὶ οὗτο, μὴδ' ἀγανάκτει,
ἑαυτῶν δ' ἐπέπαι, καὶ δ' ὅσον δύνη.
Aur. Carm.

But if we grieve and moan, because we cannot obtain some good above our reach, or not decline some unavoidable evil, what do we thereby but palpably express our folly, and wilfully heighten our Woe; adding voluntary displeasure to the heap of necessary want or pain; impressing more deeply on our selves the sense of them? in such a case patience is instead of a remedy, which though it do not thoroughly cure the malady, yet it somewhat alleviateth it, preventing many bad symptoms, and asswaging the paroxysms thereof. What boots it to winse and kick against fortune? to do so will inflame us, and make us foam, but will not relieve or ease us? if we cannot get out of the net, or the cage, to flutter and flounce will do nothing but batter and bruise us.

Levius fit patientia
Quicquid corrigere est nefas. Hor.

Animus aquus optimum est arumina
condimentum. Plaut. Rud.

Επί ζήμια
χρημάτων, καὶ
θανάτῳ, καὶ
ἀρρώστια, καὶ
τοῖς λοιποῖς

τοῖς συμπίπτουσιν ἡμῖν δεινοῖς ἀλγύουσιν, καὶ ἀθυμῶντες ὁ μόνον ὑδαμῶν ἀπὸ ταύτης κατεπόμεθα παρρησιάζαν, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐπι-
τείνοντες τὰ δεινά. Chrys. Ἀρδρ. 3.
Οἱ δὲ πῶς πάθει δαλωθέντες εἰδὲν μὴ κερδαίνουσιν ἰσορροφίαν, ἀνιερῶς δὲ βιάσονται, καὶ παροτρύνουσι ἑῷ ὅλον ὃ ἡγε-
μόνα. Theod. Ep. 15.

But farther, to allay our discontents, let us consider the World, and general state of Men here.

1. Look *first* upon the World; as it is commonly managed and ordered by Men: Thou perhaps art displeased, that thou dost not prosper and thrive therein, that thou dost not share in the goods of it; that its accommodations and preferments are all snapt from thee; that thy pretences are not satisfied, and thy designs fail; this thou dost take to be somewhat hard, and unequal; and therefore art grieved. But if thou art wise, thou shouldst not wonder; if thou art good, thou shouldst not be vexed hereat: for thou hast not, perhaps, any capacity for this World; thy temper and disposition are not framed to suit with its way; thy principles and rules do clash with it, thy resolutions and designs do not well comport with prosperity here; thou canst not, or wilt not use the means needful to compass worldly ends: Thou perhaps hast a meek, quiet, modest, sincere, steady disposition; thou canst not be pragmatical and boisterous, eager and fierce, importunately troublesome, intolerably confident, unaccountably versatile and various: Thou hast certain pedantick notions about right and wrong, certain Romantick fancies about another World (unlike to this) which thou dost stiffly adhere to, and which have an influence upon thy actions: Thou hast a squeamish conscience, which cannot relish this, cannot digest that advantageous course of proceeding; a scrupulous humour, that hampereth thee, and curbeth thee from attempting many things which would serve thy purpose; thou hast a spice of silly generosity, which maketh divers profitable ways of acting (such as forging and feigning, supplanting others by detraction and calumny, soothing and flattering people) to be below thee, and unworthy of thee; Thou thinkest thy self obliged, and art peremptorily resolved to observe strict rules of justice, of humanity, of charity, to speak as thou meanest, to do as thou wouldest be done to, to wrong no man any-wise, to consider and tender the case of other men as thine own; Thy designs are honest and moderate, conducible to (or at least consistent with) the publick good, injurious or hurtful to no man; Thou carriest on thy designs by fair ways, by a modest care, and harmless diligence; nor canst be drawn to use any other, how seemingly needful soever, which do favour of fraud, violence, any sort of wrong or baseness: Thou hast an honest pride and haughtiness of mind, which will not let thee condescend to use those sly tricks, crooked ways and shifts, which commonly are the compendious and most effectual ways of accomplishing designs here: Thou art, in fine, (like *Helvidius Priscus*) in thy dealings and proceedings, *pervicax recti*, wilfully and peevishly honest: Such an one perhaps art thou, and such is thy way; And canst thou hope to be any body, or get any thing here? Shall such a superstitious Fop, such a conscientious simpleton, such a bashful sneaksby, so phantastick a philosopher pretend to any thing here? No, thou art here *piscis in arido*, quite out of thy element; this World is not for thee to thrive in.

Τὸ πρῶτον γαλῶν τε καὶ ἀτεχνῶν
καὶ πρὸς τοὺς πρὸς εὐροδιστάδας ἀνέ-
πιτήθειον. Naz. Ep. 63.

This World is for Worldlings to possess and enjoy: *It was* (say the *Rab-*
bins) *made for the presumptuous*; and although God did not altogether de-

sign it for them, yet men have almost made it so: They are best qualified to thrive in it, who can lustily buffle and scramble; who can fiercely swagger and huff; who can fawn; who can wind and wriggle like a Serpent; who can

Quod facillimum factu est pravus, & callidus bonos & modestos antiebat.
Tac. Hist. 1.

finely cog and gloze; who can neatly shuffle and juggle; who can shrewdly over-reach and undermine others; those slippery wily artists, who can veere any whither with any

Wind; those men of impregnable confidence, who can insist upon any pretences; who can be indefatigably and irresistibly urgent, nor will be repulsed or baffled by any means; those who have a temper so lax and supple, that they can bend it to any compliance advantageous to them; who have a spirit so limber, that they can stretch it any whither; who have face

Ἐφιδάτης στρατηγὸς οὐκ ἐδίδασκεν ἀντιπάλῳ περιαν, πρὶν ἔτερον, ἔφη, διὰ τί λέγεις; ὅτι δίκαιός εἰμι. AEL 13. 39.

enough, and conscience little enough to do any thing; who have no certain principles, but such as will sort with their interests: no rules but such *Lesbian* and leaden ones, that easily may be accommodated to their purposes: whose de-

signs all tend to their own private advantage, without any regard to the publick, or to the good of others; who can use any means conducive to such designs, bogling at nothing, which serveth their purpose; nor caring what they say, be it true or false; what they do, be it right or wrong, so it seem profitable: this is called wisdom, prudence, dexterity, ability, knowledge of men, and of the world, and I know not what beside; in the *Scripture* the *wisdom of the world*, and of the *flesh*; *craft*, *guile*, *deceit*, *υποκρίματα*, &c. For such Persons it is to flourish in this World; *Behold these* (saith the *Psalmist*) *are the ungodly, who prosper in the world; and who encrease in riches; they are not in trouble as other men, neither are they plagued like other men; their eyes stand out with fatness, they have more than heart could wish*: They it is who love the World, who seek it, who study and labour for it; Who spend all their time, and employ all their care about it; And is it not fit they should have it? Is it not a pity they should miss it? Is it not natural, that they *who sow to the flesh, should reap from the flesh*? Should not they who use the proper means obtain the end? Should not they arrive at the place, who proceed in the direct road thither?

Psalm. 73. 12. 5. 7.

1 Joh. 2. 16.

But for thee, who canst not find in thy heart to use the means, why dost thou hope to compass the end; or grieve for not attaining it? Why dost thou blend and jumble such inconsistencies together, as the eager desires of this, and hopes of another World? It becometh not such a gallant to whine and pule. If thou wilt be brave, be brave indeed; singly and throughly; be not a double-hearted mongrel; think not of satisfying thy mind, and driving on other interests together; of enjoying the conceit of being an honest man, with the design of being a rich or great man; of arriving to the happiness of the other World, and attaining prosperity in this? Wouldst thou enjoy both these? What conscience is there in that? Leave rather this World unto those, who are more fit for it, who seem better to deserve it, who venture so much, and take such pains for it; do not go to rob them of this slender reward; but with content see them to enjoy the fruits of their labour and hazard: Be thou satisfied with the consequences of thy virtuous resolutions and proceedings; if it be worth thy while to live innocently, modestly and conscientiously, do it, and be satisfied; spoil not thine expectations by repining at the want of those things, which thy circumstances render incompatible with them: Follow effectually the holy *Patriarchs* and *Apostles*, who, without regret, forsook all, and cheerfully went thither, whither conscience and duty called them; if thou art not willing to do so, Why dost thou pretend to the same principles, or hope for

1 Cor. 10. 33. Περὶ τῆς ἐλπίδος οὐκ ἐστὶν ὁ βίος τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἐπὶ γῆς. Job 7. 1. Chryl. ad Stag. 2. (p. 106)

the like rewards? But leaving the consideration of the World as man hath made it; Consider that this World is not in its nature or design, a place of perfect ease and convenience, of pure delight and satisfaction: What is this World but a region of tumult and trouble; a Theatre of

vanity and disasters; the Kingdom of care, of fear, of grief and pain; of satiety, of disappointment, of regret and repentance? We came not hither to do our Will, or enjoy our pleasure; we are not born to make Laws for our selves, or to pick our condition here: No, this World is a place of banishment from our first Country, and the original felicity we were designed to;

Οὐ νομοθετοῦντες ἡμεῖς, ἀλλὰ ὅτι οὐκ ἐστὶν ὁ βίος ἐπὶ γῆς. Plut. ad Apollon.

this

this life is a state of travel toward another *better Country* and seat of rest: and well it is, in such cases, (well it is, I say, for us as Exiles and Travellers) if we can find any tolerable accommodation, if we can make any hard shift; It should not be strange unto us, if in this our peregrination we do meet with rough passages, foul ways, hard lodging, scant or course fare; if we complain of such things, we do not surely consider where we are, whence we came, whither we are going; we forget that we are the Sons of *Adam*, the Heirs of sin and sorrow, who have forfeited our rest and joy upon earth; we consider not, how unavoidable the effects are of that fatal condemnation and curse which followed our first transgression; we mind not that the perfection and purity of the blessings we have lost is not to be found on this side the celestial Paradise. This World is purposely made somewhat unpleasant to us, lest we should over-much delight in it, be unwilling to part with it, with to set up our rest here, and say, *Bonum est esse hic; It is good for us to be here.*

This life is a state of probation and exercise, like to that (which prefigured and represented it) of God's People in the Wilderness, wherein *God leadeth us* through many difficulties and hazards, in many wants and hardships, to *humble and prove us*, in order to the fitting us for another more happy state.

No temptation therefore (or affliction) *can seize upon us, but such as is humane*; that is, such as is natural and proper to men; 'tis the consideration, which *St. Paul* useth to comfort and support us in troubles; and a plainly good one it is, for seeing *Man* (as *Eliphaz* saith) *is born to trouble as the sparks fly upward*; that nothing is more natural to any thing, than trouble is to us; if we are displeased therewith, we are in effect displeased that we are men; it implyeth that we gladly would put off our nature, and cease to be our selves; we grieve that we are come to live in this World, and as well might we be vexed that we are not Angels; or that we are not yet in Heaven, which is the only place exempt from inconveniences and troubles, where alone *there is no sorrow, no clamour, no pain.*

It hath always been, and it will ever be an universal complaint and lamentation, that the life of man and trouble are individual companions, continually and closely sticking one to the other; that life and misery are but several names of the same thing; that our state here is nothing else, but a combination of various evils (made up of cares, of labours, of dangers, of disappointments, of discords, of disquiets, of diseases, of manifold pains and sorrows) that all ages, from wailing infancy to querulous decrepitness, and all conditions, from the careful Sceptre to the painful spade, are fraught with many great inconveniences peculiar to each of them; that all the face of the Earth is overspread with mischiefs as with a general and perpetual deluge; that nothing perfectly sound, nothing safe, nothing stable, nothing serene is here to be found; this with one sad voice all mankind resoundeth; this our *Poets* are ever moanfully singing, this our *Philosophers* do gravely inculcate; this the experience of all times loudly proclaimeth: For what are all Histories but continual registers of the evils incident to men; what do they all describe, but wars and slaughters, mutinies and seditions, tumults and confusions, devastations and ruins? What do they tell us, but of men furiously striving together, circumventing, spoiling, destroying one another? What do we daily hear reported, but cruel broils, bloody battles, and tragical events; great numbers of men slain, wounded, hurried into captivity; Cities sacked and razed, Countries harassed and depopulated; Kingdoms and Commonwealths overturned? What do we see before us but men carking, toiling, bickering; some worn out with labour, some pining away for want, some groaning under pain? And amidst so

Διὰ τὸ τοῦτο καὶ ὁ Θεὸς ὀπίσθεν φύσει, καὶ μοχθεῖν ἡμῶν τὸ βίον κατεσκεύαζεν, ἵνα ὑποδύναται συνωδύμενοι θλίψεως, ὁπθυμίαν ἢ μελλόντων λάξωμεν, εἰ γὰρ οὐκ, &c. Chrys. ἀνδρ. 5.

Deut. 8. 23.

Λογίζεσθε χρεὶ, ὅτι ὁ μὴ ἔπειθλον, καὶ ἢ σφαγῶν καιρὸς, ὁ μέλλον βῆν αἰών. ἢ ἡ παλαισμάτων καὶ ἡ ἰδρώτων παρῶν Chrys. ad Stag. 2.

Πειρασμοὶς ὑμῶν, ἐκ ἀληθινῶν εἰ μὴ ἀνθρώπων. 1 Cor. 10. 3.

Ecclus. 40. 1. Ἀχολία ἐκτίσας παντὶ ἀνθρώπῳ, &c.

Job. 5. 7.

Vid. Max. Tyr. diff. 25. p. 244.

It was the doom of man to eat his bread in sorrow all the days of his life. Gen. 3. 17.

Eccl. 1. 14. All is vanity and vexation of spirit.

Apoc. 21. 4.

Ὁ βίος ἀληθῶς ἐρίος, ἀλλὰ ξυμφορῶν. Βίος γὰρ ὄνομα ἔχει πόνου δ' ἐργῶν πέλει. Eurip.

Quid est diu vivere, nisi diu torqueri? Aug.

Πλεῖν μὲν γὰρ κακῶν, πλεῖν δ' ἀλγῶν. Hesiod.

*Ferre, quam sortem patiuntur omnes,
Nemo recuset. Sen. Troad.*

*Idem mihi videtur rerum natura, quod
gravissimum fecit, commune fecisse, ut cru-
delitatem fatis consolaretur aequalitas. Sen.
ad Polyb. 21.*

many common miseries and misfortunes, in so generally confused and dismal a state of things, is it not ridiculously absurd for us, doth it not argue in us a prodigious fondness of self-love, heinously to resent, or impatiently to bemoan our particular and private crosses? May not reasonably that expostulation of *Jeremy to Baruch* reach us? *The Lord*

Jer. 45. 4. 5. saith thus, Behold, that which I have built, I will break down; and that which I have planted I will pluck up, even this whole land; And seekest thou great things for thy self? seek them not; for behold I will bring evil on all flesh.

4. Again, if we more closely and particularly survey the states of other men (of our brethren every-where, of our neighbours all about us) and compare our case with theirs, our condition hardly can appear to us so bad, but that we have many comforts and associates therein; many as ill, many far worse beset than our selves. How many of our Brethren in the World may we observe conflicting with extream penury and distress; how many undergoing continual hard drudgeries to maintain their lives; how many sorely pinched with hunger and cold; how many tortured with grievous sickness; how many oppressed with debt; how many shut up under close restraint; how many detained in horrible slavery; how many by the wasting rage of War rifled of their goods, driven from their homes, dispossessed of all comfortable subsistence? How many, in fine, passing their lives in all the inconveniences of rude, beggarly, sordid and savage barbarism? And who of us have, in any measure, tasted of these, or of the like calamities? Yet are these Sufferers, all of them, the same in nature, with us; many of them, (as reason, as humility, as charity do oblige us to believe) deserve as well, divers of them much better than ourselves: What reason then can we have to conceive our case so hard, or to complain thereof?

Lam. 1. 12. Were we the only persons exposed to trouble, or the single marks of adverse fortune; could we truly say with the Prophet, Behold, if there be any sorrow like my sorrow; we might seem a little unhappy: But since we have so much good

—Nec rara videmus

*Qua patoris; casus multis hic cognitus &
jam*

*Tritus, & à medio fortuna ductus acervo.
Juv. Sat. 13. v. 8.*

*Te nunc delicias extra communia censes
Ponendum, &c. Juv. Sat. 13. v. 140.*

company in our conceived Woe; since it is so ordinary a thing to be poor, and distressed; since *our case is* (as the *Poet* speaketh) *not rare, but commonly known, trite, and drawn out from the heap of lots, offered to men by fortune:* Since pitiful objects do thus environ and enclose us; 'tis plainly reasonable, humane and just, that we should without murmuring take, and bear our lot: For what privilege have we

to alledge, that we rather than others should be untouched by the grievances, to which mankind is obnoxious? Whence may we pretend to be the special favourites, mignons, privados and darlings of fortune? Why may not God as well deal with us, as he doth with other men; what grounds have we to challenge, or to expect that he should be partial toward us; why should we imagine, that he must continually do miracles in our behalf, causing all those evils, which fall upon our neighbours all about to skip over us, bedewing us, like *Gideon's fleece*, with plenty and joy, while all the earth beside is dry; causing us, like the *three children*, to walk in this wide furnace, unscorched and unsinged by the flames encompassing us? Are we not men framed of the same mould; are we not sinners guilty of like offences, with the meanest Peasant, the poorest beggar, the most wretched slave (if so, then a parity of Fortune with any men doth become us, and may be due to us; then it is a perverse and unjust frowardness to be displeased with our lot) we may if we please, pity the common state of men, but we cannot reasonably complain of our own; doing so plainly doth argue, that we do unmeasurably overprize, and overlove our selves. When once a *great King* did excessively and obstinately grieve for the death of his Wife, whom he tenderly loved, a *Philosopher* observing it, told him, "That he was ready to comfort him by restoring her to life, supposing only that he would supply what was needful toward the performing it;" The *King* said he was ready to furnish him with any thing; the *Philosopher* answer'd, "That he was provided with all things necessary, except one thing; what that was the *King* demanded; he replied, *That if he would upon his Wife's Tomb inscribe the names of three persons, who never mourned, she presently would revive:* the *King*, after inquiry, told the *Philosopher*,

Jud. 6. 37.

Dan. 3. 25.

pher, That he could not find one such man, *Why then, O absurdest of all men* (said the *Philosopher* smiling) *art thou not ashamed to moan as if thou hadst alone fallen into so grievous a case; when as thou canst not find one person, that ever was free from such domestick affliction?* So might the naming one person, exempted from inconveniences, like to those we undergo, be safely proposed to us as a certain cure of ours; but if we find the condition impossible, then is the generality of the case a sufficient ground of content to us; then may we, as the wise *Poet* adviseth, *solace our own evils by the evils of others*, so frequent and obvious to us.

5. We are indeed very apt to look upward toward those few, who, in supposed advantages of life (in wealth, dignity, or reputation) do seem to transcend, or to precede us, grudging and repining at their fortune; but seldom do we cast down our eyes on those innumerable many good people, who lie beneath us in all manner of accommodations, pitying their mean, or hard condition; like Racers we look forward, and pursue those who go before us, but reflect not backward, or consider those who come behind us: two or three outshining us in some slender piece of prosperity, doth raise dissatisfaction in us; while the doleful state of millions doth little affect us with any regard or compassion: hence so general discontent springeth, hence so few are satisfied with their condition; an epimedical eye-fors molesting every man; for there is no man, of whatsoever condition, who is not in some desirable things outstripped by others; none is so high in fortune, but another in wit or wisdom, in health, or strength, or beauty, in reputation or esteem of men may seem to excel him; he therefore looking with an *evil* or envious eye on such persons, and with senseless disregard passing over the rest of men, doth easily thereby lose his ease and satisfaction from his own Estate: Whereas if we would consider the case of most men, we should see abundant reason to be satisfied with our own; if we would a little feel the calamities of our neighbours, we should little resent our own crosses; a kindly commiseration of others more grievous disasters would drown the sense of our lesser disappointments.

If with any competent heedfulness we view persons and things before us, we shall easily discern, that what absolutely seemeth great and weighty, is indeed comparatively very small and light; that things are not so unequally dispensed, but that we have our full share in good, and no more than our part in evil; * that *Socrates* had reason to suppose, that, *if we should bring into one common stock all our mishaps, so that each should receive his portion of them, gladly the most would take up their own, and go their ways*; that consequently it is both iniquity and folly in us to complain of our lot.

6. If even we would take care diligently to compare our state with the state of those, whom we are apt most to admire and envy, it would afford matter of consolation, and content unto us. What is the state of the greatest persons (of the Worlds *Princes* and *Grandeess*) what, but a state encompassed with snares and temptations numberless, which without extreme caution and constancy, force of reason, and command of all appetites and passions, cannot be avoided; and seldom are? What but a state of pompous trouble, and gay servility, of living in continual noise and stir, environed with crowds and throngs, of being subject to the urgency of business, and the tediousness of ceremony; of being abused by perfidious servants, and mocked by vile flatterers; of being exposed to common censure and obloquy, to misrepresentation, misconstruction and slander; having the eyes of all men intent upon their actions, and as many severe judges as watchful spectators of them; of being accountable for many mens faults, and bearing the blame of all miscarriages about them; of being responsible in conscience, for the miscarriages and mishaps which come from the influence of our counsels, our examples, &c. of being pester'd and pursu'd with pretences, with suits, with complaints, the necessary

ἔτι δὲ πάντων ἀποπύσσεσθαι θρυλῶς ἀνείδων, ὡς μόνον ἀλγεῖν τοσάτω συμπλακεῖς, ὁ μὴδὲ ἓνα τῶν πώποτε γεγενημένων ἀμοιβῶν οἰκῆσαι πάσας ἔχων. Jul. Ep. 38.

Παραγόμενα κακά δι' ἐτέ-
ρον κακῶν. Menand.

Nulli ad aliena respicienti sua placent. Sen. de Ira. 3. 31.

— Neque se majori pauperiorum Turba comparet, hunc atque hunc superare labores: Ut cum carceribus, &c. Hor. Sat. 1.

Inde fit ut nemo, qui se vixisse beatum Dicat; &c. Hor. Sat. 1.

Si vis gratus esse adversus Deos, & adversus vitam tuam, cogita quam multos antecesseris. Sen. Ep. 15.

Nunquam erit felix, quem torquetur felicior. Sen. de Ira. 3. 31. Vid. Ib.

* Εἰ συνέγχαίμεν εἰς τὸ κοινὸν τὰς ἀτυχίας, ὥστε διελθεῖν τὸ ἴσον ἕκαστοι, εὐσέμῳ ἂν τὴν πλείονος τὰς οὐτῶν λαβόντας ἀπελθεῖν. Plut. Apoll.

That at worst we are Extremi primorum, extremis usque priores. Hor. Epist. 2. 2.

Magna servituti est magna fortuna, &c. Sen. ad Polyb. 26.

necessary result whereof is to displease and provoke very many, to oblige or satisfy very few, of being frequently engaged in resentments of ingratitude, of treachery, of neglects, of defects in duty, and breaches of trust toward them; of being constrained to comply with the humours and opinion of men; of anxious care to keep, and jealous fear of losing all; of danger and being objected to the traiterous attempts of bold male-contents, of fierce zealots and wild fanatics; of wanting the most solid and favourable comforts of life, true friendship, free conversation, certain leisure, privacy and retiredness, for enjoying themselves, their time, their thoughts as they think good; of satiety and being cloyed with all sorts of enjoyments: In fine, of being paid with false coin for all their cares and pains, receiving for them scarce any thing

Personata felicitas. Sen. Ep. 80.

Psal. 62. 9.

adulandi certamen est. & unum omnium amicorum officium, una contentio quis blandissime fallat. Sen. de Benef. 6. 36.

Vid. optime differentem.

Fid. & de Clem. 1. 19.

Et ad Polyb. 26.

Antigonus. Nescitis amici, quid mali sit imperare, &c. Saturninus apud Vopiscum.

Hic situs est Adrian. VI. qui nihil sibi in vita infelicius duxit, quam quod imperavit. Lud. Guicciard. P. Jovius in vit.

more, but empty shews of respect, and hollow acclamations of praise; (whence the *Psalmist* might well say, *Surely men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree a lye; a lye, for their state cheateth us, appearing so specious, yet being really so inconvenient and troublesome.*) Such is the state of the greatest men; such as hath made wise Princes weary of themselves, ready to acknowledge, that if men knew the weight of a Crown, none would take it up; apt to think with *Pope Adrian*, who made this *Epitaph* for himself; *Here lyeth Adrian the Sixth, who thought nothing in his life to have befallen him more unhappy, than that he ruled:* Such, in fine, their state, as upon due consideration we should, were it offered to our choice, never embrace; such indeed, as in sober judgment, we cannot prefer before the most narrow and inferiour fortune: How then can we reasonably be displeased with our condition, when we may even pity *Emperours* and *Kings*, when, in reality, we are as well, perhaps much better than they.

Nihil difficilius quam bene imperare. Dioclet. apud Vopisc. in Aureliano.

7. Farther, it may induce and engage us to be content, to consider what commonly hath been the lot of good men in the World: We shall, if we survey the Histories of all times, find the best men to have sustained most grievous crosses and troubles; scarce is there in holy Scripture recorded any person eminent and illustrious for goodness, who have not tasted deeply of wants and distresses. *Abraham the Father of the faithful, and especial friend of God*, was called out of his Country, and

Consider what Calamities great, powerful, glorious men have endured; *Cræsus*. *Polycr. Pomp. &c. Sen. de Ira. 3. 25.*

Οἱ τοῦ Ἑλλάνων ἀεῖοι πενία διέζων παρὰ πάντα τὰ βίον. (Aristides, Phocion, Epaminondas, Pelipodas.) Æl. xi. 9. 11. 43

Lamachus, Socrates, Epilates.

Abel, Noe, &c. Chryl. Tom. 6. p. 107.

from his Kindred, to wander in a strange land, and lodge in Tents, without any fixed habitation. *Jacob* spent a great part of his life in slavish toil, and in his old age was in reflection upon his life moved to say, *that the days of his pilgrimage had been few and evil.* *Joseph* was maligned and persecuted by his Brethren, sold away for a slave, slandered for a most heinous crime, thrust into a grievous prison, where *his feet were hurt with fetters, and his soul came into iron.* *Moses* was forced to fly away for his life, to become a vagabond in

Gen. 47. 9. Psal. 105. 18.

Σίσυρον δὲ ἤλθεν ἢ ψυχὴ αὐτοῦ.

Socrates, Cato, Regulus, Phocion, &c. Magnum exemplum nisi mala fortuna non invenit.

Vid. Chryl.

Tom. 5. Or. 27.

p. 168. &

Tom. 6. Or. 10.

p. 107.

Job. 13. 27.

1 Sam. 26. 20.

Νῦν καὶ πάσαι ἐξ ἡμετέρας ἀνθρώπων ἀπαντες οἱ τῷ θεῷ φίλοι τῶν συγγενῶν καὶ ἐμπόχων καὶ μισέων γίνονται δεινῶς ἐκληρωθέντες ἐν ἡμέρᾳ. Chryl. in Marc. Egypt. T. 5. 522.

Ἐν τοῖς περασμοῖς ὡς θύει οἱ δίκαιοι, τὰς ἀγίας ἀπαντας ἕως ἡγάρ, ὁ θεὸς διὰ θλίψεως. Chryl. in 2 Cor. Or. 27.

Lam. 3. 1. Acts 7. 52.

man that have seen affliction by the rod of his wrath, &c. Which of the Prophets were

not

not persecuted, and misused? as St. Stephen asked. The Apostles were pinched ^{1 Cor. 4. 6. 7.} with all kinds of want, harassed with all sorts of toil, exposed to all manner of hazards, persecuted with all variety of contumelies, and pains that can be imagined: Above all, our Lord himself beyond expression was *a man of sor-* ^{Chryl. Tom. 6. Or. 93. Hb. 53. 3. Matt. 8. 20.} row, and acquainted with grief, surpassing all men in suffering as he did excel them in dignity, and in virtue; extreme poverty, *having not so much as where to lay his head*, was his portion; to undergo continual labour and travel, without any mixture of carnal ease or pleasure, was his state; in return for the highest good will and choicest benefits, to receive most cruel hatred, and grievous injuries, to be loaded with the bitterest reproaches, the foulest slanders, the forest pains which most spiteful malice could invent, or fiercest rage inflict, this was his lot: *Am I poor?* so, may one say, was he to extremity; *Am I slighted of the World?* so was he notoriously; *Am I disappointed, and crossed in my Designs?* so was he continually; all his most painful endeavours having small effect; *Am I deserted or betrayed of Friends?* so was he by those who were most intimate, and most obliged to him; *Am I reviled, slandered, misused?* Was not he so beyond all comparison most outrageously?

Have all these, and many more, of whom the world was not worthy, undergone all sorts of inconvenience, being destitute, afflicted, tormented; And shall we then disdain, or be sorry to be found in such company? *Having such a cloud of martyrs, Let us run with patience the race that is set before us.* Is it not an Honour, should it not be a comfort to us, that we do, in condition, resemble them? If God hath thus dealt with those, who of all Men have been dearest to him, shall we take it ill at his hands, that he, in any manner, dealeth so with us? Can we pretend, can we hope, can we even wish to be used better; than God's first-born, and our Lord himself hath been? If we do, are we not monstrously fond and arrogant? especially considering, that it is not only an ordinary fortune, but the peculiar character of Gods chosen, and children, to be often crossed, checked and corrected; Even Pagans have observed it, and avowed there is great reason for it; God (saith Seneca) bath a fatherly mind toward good men; and strongly loveth them—therefore after the manner of severe parents, he educateth them hardly, &c. The Apostle doth in express terms assure us thereof; for, whom (saith he) the Lord loveth, he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons—but if ye be without chastisement, whereof all (that is, all good men, and genuine Sons of God) are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. Would we be illegitimated, or expunged from the number of God's true children; would we be divested of his special regard and good-will? if not, Why do we not gladly embrace, and willingly sustain adversity, which is by himself declar'd so peculiar a badge of his children, so constant a mark of his favour? if all good men do (as the Apostle asserteth,) partake thereof; shall we, by displeasure at it, shew, that we desire to be assuredly none of that party, that we affect to be discarded from that holy and happy society? *Verily, verily, I say, unto you, that ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice.* It is peculiarly the lot of Christians, as such, in conformity to their afflicted Saviour; they are herein predestinated to be conformable to his image; to this they are appointed. (Let no man, saith St. Paul, be moved by these afflictions, for ye know, that we are appointed thereunto:) to this they are called (if when we do well, saith St. Peter, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God; for even hereunto are we called) this is propounded to them as a condition to be undertaken, and undergone by them as such; they are by profession crucigeri, bearers of the cross; (If any one will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me; Every one that will live godly in Christ Jesus, must suffer persecution) by this are they admitted into the state of Christians; (by many afflictions we must enter into the Kingdom of heaven) this doth qualify them for enjoying the glorious rewards, which their religion pro-

Ἐκ τῶ πρώτου οὐνότων ἀνθρώπων μέλει τὸ παρὸν καὶ τὸ μέλλον ἐσπιδάκοντας σέβαν δέον ἔχειν παρὰ τὴ συμβεβηκότων ἀνθρώπων ἡδονῆς, καὶ πλείους ἀγαν περιπεπλημένους ἀνταγίς. Theod. Ep. 132.

Heb. 11. 38.

Heb. 12. 1.

Sen. de Prov. vid. c. 2.

Heb. 12. 6, 7, 8.

Ecclus. 2. 1. Τέκνον, εἰ περὶ σέ εἰς ἀδελφὸν κρείων, ἐπὶ τὴν μάσπον τῶν ψυχῶν σε εἰς πειρασμόν.

John 16. 20.

Rom. 8. 29. 1 Thess. 3. 3. Phil. 3. 10.

1 Pet. 2. 20.

21.

Mat. 16. 24. 10. 38. 2 Tim. 2. 12. John 16. 33. Ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ θλίψιν ἔσεται.

Quotam partem angustiarum perpassus sum qui cruci milito? Hier. ad Asellam, Ep. 99.

poundeth;

Acts 14. 22.

Vid. Greg. Naz. Epi. 201. (ad Theclam.)

2 Tim. 2. 12.

(Phil 3. 10.)

* It is a privilege of Christians. in favour bestowed on them; *ὁμῶν**ἐχαρίσθη.* Phil. 1. 29.

Our glory, Eph. 3. 13.

ἡ ἡμετέρα χάρις, Heb. 10. 36.

Faith and Patience are comforts.

Heb. 6. 12. Apoc. 13. 10.

poundeth; (*We are coheirs with Christ; so that, if we suffer together, we shall also together be glorified with him; If we endure, we shall also reign with him;*) * And shall we then pretend to be Christians, shall we claim any benefit from thence, if we are unwilling to submit to the Law, to attend the call, to comply with the terms thereof? Will we enjoy its privileges, can we hope for its rewards, if we will not contentedly undergo what it requireth? Shall we arrive to the end it propoundeth, without going in the way it prescribeth, the way which our Lord himself doth lead us in, and himself hath trod before us?

In fine, seeing adversity is, as hath been declared, a thing so natural to all men, so common to most men, so incident to great men, so proper to good men, so peculiar to Christians, we have great reason to observe the *Apostles* advice; *Beloved, wonder not concerning the fiery trial, which is to try you, as if some strange thing happened to you; we should not wonder at it as a strange, or uncouth thing, that we are engaged in any trouble or inconvenience here; we are consequently not to affected with it as a thing very grievous.*

S E R M O N IX.

Of CONTENTMENT.

P H I L. iv. 11.

I have learned in whatever state I am, therewith to be content.

1 Tim. 6. 6.
Ἔστι ἡ μέγας
πονηρία ἡ
διόλεια καὶ
αὐταρχείας.

Aug. de Civ.
Dei. 1. 8.

Moreover considering the nature of this duty it self, may be a great inducement and aid to the practice of it.

1. It is it self a sovereign remedy, for all poverty and all sufferance; removing them, or allaying all the mischief they can do us.

It is well and truly said by St. *Austine*, *Interest non qualia, sed qualis quis patitur; It is no matter what, but how disposed a man suffereth*: The chief mischief any adversity can do us is to render us discontent, in that consisteth all the sting, and all the venom thereof; which thereby being voided, adversity can signify nothing prejudicial, or noxious to us; all distraction, all distemper, all disturbance from it is by the antidote of contentedness prevented or corrected. He that hath his desires moderated to a temper suitable with his condition, that hath his passions composed and settled agreeably to his circumstances, what can make any grievous impression on him, or render him any-wise miserable?

He that taketh himself to have enough, what doth he need? he that is well-pleased to be as he is, how can he be better? What can the largest Wealth, or highest prosperity in the World yield more, or better, than satisfaction of mind? He that hath this most essential ingredient of felicity, is he not thence in effect most fortunate? is not at least his condition as good as that of the most prosperous?

2. As

Cui cum paupertate bene convenit, dives est. Sen. Ep. 2.

Nemo aliorum sensu miser est sed suo; ideo non possunt cujusquam falso iudicio esse miseri, qui sunt verè conscientia suâ beati. Nulli beatiore sunt, quam qui hoc sunt quod volunt. Salv. de Gubern. Dei, 1.

2. As good, do I say? yea is it not plainly much better, than can arise merely from any secular prosperity? for satisfaction springing from rational consideration, and virtuous disposition of mind, is indeed far more precious, more noble and worthy, more solid and durable, more sweet and delectable, than that which any possession, or fruition of worldly goods can afford: The τὸ ἀρδαρτον τὲ πρᾶξι, καὶ ἡσυχίᾳ πινδυμᾶσι, *incorruptibility* (as St. Peter speaketh) *of a meek and quiet spirit is before God of great price; before God*, that is, according to the most upright and certain judgment it is the most precious and valuable thing in the World; *There is* (the *Philosopher* could say) *no spectacle more worthy of God* (or grateful to him) *than a good man gallantly combating with ill fortune.* Not to be discomposed or distempered in mind, not to fret or whine, when all things flow prosperously and according to our mind, is no great praise, no sign of wisdom, or argument of goodness; it cannot be reckoned an effect of sound judgment, or virtuous affection, but a natural consequent of such a state: But when there are evident occasions, and urgent temptations to displeasure, when present sense and fancy do prompt and provoke to murmuring, then to be satisfied in our mind, then to keep our passions in order, then to maintain good humour, then to restrain our tongue from complaint, and to govern our demeanour sweetly, this is indeed honourable and handsome; to see a worthy man sustain crosses, wants, disgraces with equanimity and cheerfulness is a most goodly sight: such a person to a judicious mind appeareth in a far more honourable and invidious state, than any prosperous man: his virtue shining in the dark is far more bright and fair: *this* (as St. Peter saith, in a like case) *is thank-worthy, if a man for conscience toward God suffereth grief; if, in our case* (we may say after him) *a man out of conscientious deference to God's Will, doth contentedly undergo adversity, this God is ready to take for an obligation on himself, and will be disposed in a manner to to thank him* (or to reward him) *for it: This indeed amounteth to a demonstration that such a person is truly wise and really good: so is the satisfaction of a contented poor man more worthy: And it is no less more sweet and comfortable, than that of any rich man, pleasing himself in his enjoyments; contentedness satisfieth the mind of the one, abundance doth only satiate the appetites of the other; the former is immaterial and sprightly, the complacency of a man; the latter is gross and dull, like the sensuality of a beast; the delight of that sinketh deep into the heart, the pleasure of this doth only float in the outward senses, or in the fancy; one is a positive comfort, the other but a negative indolency in regard to the mind: The poor good man's joy is wholly his own, and home-born, a lovely child of reason and virtue; the full rich man's pleasure cometh from without, and is thrust into him by impulses of sensible objects.*

Hence is the satisfaction of contented adversity far more constant, solid and durable, than that of prosperity; it being the product of immutable reason abideth in the mind, and cannot easily be driven thence by any corporeal impressions, which immediately cannot touch the mind; whereas the other, issuing from sense, is subject to all the changes, inducible from the restless commotions of outward causes affecting and altering sense: whence the satisfaction proceeding from reason and virtue, the longer it stayeth the firmer and sweeter it groweth, turning into habit, and working nature to an agreement with it; whereas usually the joys of wealth and prosperity do soon degenerate into fastidiousness, and terminate in bitterness, being *honey in the mouth*, but soon becoming *gall in the bowels*. Nothing indeed can affect the mind with a truer pleasure, than the very conscience of discharging our duty toward God in bearing hardship, imposed by his providence, willingly and well. We have therefore much reason not only to acquiesce in our straits but to be glad of them, seeing they do yield us an opportunity of immediately obtaining goods, more excellent and more desirable, than any prosperous or wealthy man can easily have, since they furnish us with means of acquiring and exercising a virtue worth the most ample fortune; yea justly preferable to the best estate in

Οὐ γὰρ τὸ ποιῆσαι τι χρηστὸν μόνον, ἀλλὰ τὸ παθεῖν τι κακὸν πολλὰς ἔχει τὰς ἀμοιβὰς καὶ μεγάλα τὰ ἔπαθλα, &c. Chryl. ad Olymp. Ep. 3. Vid. p. 73.

Οὐδὲν γὰρ ἐν ἀληθείᾳ ὑπομονῆς εἰς ἀδοκιμήσεως λόγον ἴσους ἢ γὰρ βασιλεὺς ἢ ἀγαθὸν, καὶ ἢ σφετέρων ἢ κορωνίς αὐτῇ μάλιστα ἔστι. Chryl. ad Olymp. Ep. 16. Vid. Epist. 6. & ad Olymp. Epist. 3. (p. 75.) de Iosepho. 1 Pet. 3. 4.

Ecce par Deo dignum vir bonus cum mala fortuna compositus. Sen. de Provid.

1 Pet. 2. 19.

Honestas res est laeta paupertas. Epic. Οὐδὲ γὰρ ὁ δὶα τὸ θεῶν τι πάχων μόνον ἀδοκιμαῖ, ἀλλὰ καὶ ὁ ἀδίκως τι πάχων, καὶ ἄλλων ἡμετέρας, καὶ ὁ ἀδικῶς τὸ συγχωρεῖν τὸ θεῶν ἐκ ἐλατρίων τὰ δὶα τὸ θεῶν ταῦτα πάχοντός ἐστιν. Chryl. ἀνδρ. 5.

Apoc. 10. 10. Job 20. 20, 22.

the World; a virtue, which indeed doth not only render any condition tolerable, but sweetneth any thing, yea sanctifieth all states, and turneth all occurrences into blessings.

3. Even the sensible smart of adversity is by contentedness somewhat tempered and eased; the stiller and quieter we lye under it, the less we feel its violence and pungency: It is tumbling and tossing, that stirreth the ill humours, and driveth them to the parts most weak, and apt to be affected with them; the rubbing of our sores is that which enflameth and exasperateth them: Where the mind is calm, and the passions settled, the pain of any grievance is in comparison less acute, less sensible.

4. Whence if others in our distress are uncharitable to us, refusing the help they might, or should afford toward the rescuing us from it, or relieving us in it, we hereby may be charitable and great benefactors to our selves; we should need no *anodyne* to be ministered from without, no succour to come from any creature, if we would not be wanting to our selves, in hearkening to our own reason, and enjoying the consolation which it affordeth. In not doing this, we are more uncharitable and cruel to our selves, than any spiteful enemy or treacherous friend can be; no man can so wrong or molest us, as we do our selves by admitting or fostering discontent.

5. The contented bearing of our condition is also the most hopeful and ready means of bettering it, and of removing the pressures we lie under.

It is partly so in a natural way, as disposing us to embrace and employ the advantages which occur conducive thereto; for as discontent blindeth men so that they cannot descry the ways of escape from evil, it dispiriteth and discourageth them from endeavouring to help themselves, it depriveth them of many succours and expedients, which occasion would afford for their relief; so he that being undisturbed in his spirit hath his eyes open and his courage up, and all his natural powers in order, will be always ready and able to do his best, to act vigorously, to snatch any opportunity, and employ any means toward the freeing himself from what appeareth grievous to him.

Upon a supernatural account content is yet more efficacious to the same purpose: For chearful submission to God's Will doth please him much, doth strongly move him to withdraw his afflicting hand, doth effectually induce him to advance us into a most comfortable state: Of all virtues there is none more acceptable to God than patience. God will take it well at our hands if we do contentedly receive from his hand the worst things: 'tis a monstrous thing not to receive prosperity with grateful sense, but it is heroical with the same mind to receive things unpleasant: he that doth so *ζημιῖται μὲν ὡς ἄνθρωπος, σφραγίζεται ὡς ἀγαπῶμεν*, *he suffereth loss as a man, but is crowned as a lover of God*. Besides that it is an unreasonable thing to think of enjoying both rest and pleasure here, and the rewards hereafter; our consolation here with *Dives*, and our refreshment hereafter with *Lazarus*.

Chrys. Tom. 6.
Or. 89.
Vid. Chrys. ad
Stag. 1. & 2.
(p. 106.)

1 Pet. 5. 6.

Be humbled (saith St Peter) under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time (ὡς καιρῶς, when it is opportune and seasonable:) and Be humble (saith St. James) before the Lord, and he will exalt you; and, When (saith Job's friends, men are cast down then thou shalt say there is lifting up, and he will save the humble person. God with favourable pity hearkeneth to the groans of

Jam 4. 10.
Job 22. 29
(Luke 14. 11.
18. 14.)

Isa. 66. 2.

57. 15.

Plai. 34. 18.

51. 17. 147 3.

Matt. 5. 3. 4.

them who are *humbly contrite* under his hand, and reverently *tremble at his word*; he *reviveth the spirit of the humble*; *He is nigh to the broken of heart, and saveth such as are of a contrite spirit*; *He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds*; He proclaimeth *blessedness to the poor in spirit, and to those that mourn*, because they shall find comfort and mercy; all which declarations and promises are made concerning those who bear adversity with a submissive and contented mind; and we see them effectually performed in the cases of *Ahab*, of the *Ninevites*, of *Nebuchadnezzar*, of *Manasses*, of *Hezekiah*, of *David*; of all persons mentioned in *holy Scripture*, upon whom adversities had such kindly operations. But discontent and impatience do offend God, and provoke him to continue his judgments, yea to increase the load of them: To be sullen and stubborn is the sure way to render our Condition worse, and more intolerable: For, *who hath hardened himself against God and prospered?* The *Pharaohs* and *Sauls*, and such like persons,

Job 9. 4.

who

who rather would break than bend, who being dissatisfied with their condition chose rather to lay hold on other imaginary succours, than to have recourse to God's mercy and help; those, who (like the refractory *Israelites*) have been *scattered in vain* as to any quiet submission or conversion unto God, what have they but plunged themselves deeper into wretchedness? Jer. 2. 30.
Isa. 9. 13. 1.
S. 26. 10.

It is indeed to quell our haughty stomach, to check our froward humour, to curb our impetuous desires, to calm our disorderly passions, to suppress our fond admiration and eager affection toward these worldly things, in short to work a contented mind in us, that God ever doth inflict any hardships on us, that he crosseth us in our projects, that he detaineth us in any troublesome state; until this be achieved, as it is not expedient that we should be eased, as relief would really be no blessing to us; so God (except in anger and judgment) will no-wise grant or dispense it; it would be a cruel mercy for him to do it: If therefore we do wish ever to be in a good case as to this World, let us learn to be contented in a bad one: Having got this disposition firmly rooted in our hearts, we are qualified for deliverance and preferment; nor will God fail in that due season to perform for us what he so often hath declared and promised; his nature disposeth him, his word hath engaged him to help and comfort us.

These are the most proper inducements unto contentedness, which considering (in the light of reason and holy *Scripture*) the nature of the thing, suggested unto my meditation: there are beside some other means advisable, (some general, some more particular) which are very conducive to the production of content, or removing discontent; which I shall touch, and then conclude.

1. A constant endeavour to live well, and to maintain a good conscience. He that doeth this can hardly be dismay'd or disturbed with any occurrence here; this will yield a man so ample and firm a satisfaction of mind, as will bear down the sense of any incumbent evils; this will beget such hope in God, and so good assurance of his favour, as will supply the want of all other things, and fully satisfy us, that we have no cause to be troubled with any thing here: He that by conscientious practice hath obtained such a hope is prepared against all assaults of fortune with an undaunted mind and force impregnable; *He will not be afraid of any evil tidings, for his heart is fixed trusting in the Lord.* Psal. 112. 12.
119. 6. Maintaining this will free us from all anxious care, transferring it upon God; it will breed a sure confidence, that he will ever be ready to supply us with all things convenient, to protect and deliver us from all things hurtful; ensuring to us the effect of that promise, by the conscience of having performed the condition thereof: *Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.* Matt. 6. 33.

This was that which supported the *Apostles*, and kept them chearful under all that heavy load of distresses which lay upon them; *Our rejoicing is this* (could they say) *the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity — we have had our conversation in this world.* 1 Cor. 1. 12.
1 Pet. 3. 16.
Acts 23. 1.
24. 16.

'Tis the want of this best pleasure, that both rendreth the absence of all other pleasures grievous, and their presence insipid: Had we a good conscience we could not seem to want comfort; as we could not truly be unhappy, so we could hardly be discontent; without it no affluence of other things can suffice to content us. It is an evil conscience that giveth an edge to all other evils, and enableth them sorely to afflict us, which otherwise would but slightly touch us; we become thence incapable of comfort, seeing not only things here upon earth to cross us, but heaven to lowre upon us; finding no visible succour, and having no hope from the power invisible; yea having reason to be discouraged with the fear of God's displeasure. As he that hath a powerful enemy near, cannot abide in peace, without anxious suspicion and fear; so he that is at variance with the Almighty, who is ever at hand, ready to cross and punish him, what quiet of mind can he enjoy? *There is no peace to the wicked.*

2. The contemplation of our future state is a sovereign medicine to work contentedness, and to cure discontent: as discontent easily doth seize upon, and cleaveth fast to Souls, which earnestly do pore and dote upon these present things, which have in them nothing satisfactory or stable, so if we

can raise our minds firmly to believe, seriously to consider, and worthily to prize the future state and its concerns, we can hardly ever be discontent in regard to these things. Considering heaven and its happiness, how low and mean, how sordid and vile, how unworthy of our care and our affection will these inferior things appear? How very unconcerned shall we see our selves to be in them, and how easily thence shall we be content to want them? What, shall any of us be then ready to say, doth it concern me in what rank or garb I pass my few days here? what considerable interest can I have in this uncertain and transitory state? what is any loss, any disgrace, any cross in this World to me, who am a Citizen of Heaven, who have a capacity and hope of the immense riches, the incorruptible glories, the perfect and endless joys of eternity? This was that which sustained the holy *Apostles* in all their distresses; *For this cause* (saith St. Paul) *we faint not* — *while we look not on the things which are seen, but on the things which are not seen, for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal*; and *I reckon* (saith he again) *that the sufferings of this present life are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us*.

2 Cor. 7. 31.
2 Cor. 4. 16.
Eccl. 5. 7.

Rem. 8. 18.

If likewise we do with faith and seriousness consider the dismal state below of those, who are eternally secluded from all joy and bliss, who are irrecoverably condemned to utter darkness, and the extremity of horrible pain; how tolerable, how pleasant, how very happy will the meanest state here appear to be? how vain a thing will it then seem to us to be to dislike, or to be troubled with any worldly thing; to account any chance happening to us to be sad, or disastrous? What, shall we say then each of us, is the same loss to the loss of my Soul and all its comforts for ever? what is this want to the perpetual want of heavenly bliss? what is this short and faint pain to the cruel pangs of endless remorse, to the *weeping and gnashing of teeth in utter darkness, to everlasting burnings*?

Thus infinitely silly and petty must all concerns of this life appear to him, who is possessed with the belief and consideration of matters relating to the future state; whence discontent in regard to them can hardly find access to his mind.

3. Constant devotion is an excellent instrument and guard of content, an excellent remedy and fence against discontent.

It is such in way of impetration, procuring the removal, or alleviation of our crosses: For God hath promised that *he will give good things to those that ask him*; *The Lord is nigh unto all that call upon him in truth*; *he will fulfil the desire of them that fear him*; *he also will hear their cry, and will save them*. *The poor man cryeth, and the Lord heareth him, and saveth him out of all his troubles*; the holy Scripture is full of such declarations and promises, assuring us of succour from our distresses, upon our supplication to God; whence St. Paul thus adviseth against all solicitude: *Be careful for nothing, but in every thing by prayer, and supplication with thanksgiving, let your request be made known to God*: And (addeth, signifying the consequence of this practice) *the peace of God which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Jesus Christ*.

Matt. 7. 11.
Psal. 145. 18.
Jam. 4. 8.
Psal. 34. 6.
107. 6.
Phil. 4. 7.
(Psal. 25. 16.
86. 1. 4. 17.
44. 23.)

It likewise performeth the same by procuring grace and aid from God, which may enable and dispose us to bear all evils well, which is really much better than a removal of them; for that hence they become wholesome and profitable to us, and causes of present good, and grounds of future reward; thus when St. Paul besought God for deliverance from his thorn in the flesh, the return to him was; *My grace is sufficient for thee*; *for my strength is made perfect in weakness*: It was a greater favour to receive an improvement of spiritual strength, occasioned by that cross, than to be quite freed from it.

2 Cor. 12. 9.
1 Cor. 10. 13.

Devotion also hath immediately of it self a special efficacy to produce content. As in any distress it is a great consolation, that we can have recourse to a good Friend, that we may discharge our cares and our resentments into his bosom; that we may demand advice from him; and, if need be, request his succour; so much more it must be a great comfort, that we can in our need approach to God, who is infinitely the most faithful, the most affectionate, the most

most sufficient Friend that can be; always most ready, most willing, most able to direct and to relieve us: He desires, and delights, that *in the day of our trouble we should seek him*; that *we should pour forth our hearts before him*; that *we should cast our burthens, and our cares upon him*, that we should upon all occasions implore his guidance and aid: And complying with his desires as we shall assuredly find a successful event of our devotions, so we shall immediately enjoy great comfort and pleasure in them.

The God of all consolation doth especially by this channel convey his comfort into our hearts; his very presence (that *presence*, in which the *Psalmist* saith *there is fulness of joy*) doth mightily warm and chear us; his Holy Spirit doth in our religious intercourse with him insinuate a lightsome serenity of mind, doth kindle sweet and kindly affections, doth scatter the gloomy clouds of sadness; practising it we shall be able to say with the *Psalmist*, *In the multitude of my thoughts within me thy comforts delight my soul.*

Humbly addressing our selves to God, and reverently conversing with him doth compose our minds, and charm our passions, doth sweeten our humour, doth refresh and raise our spirits, and so doth immediately breed and nourish contentedness.

It also strengthneth our faith, and quickeneth our hope in God, whereby we are enabled to support our present evils, and peace of mind doth spring up within us.

It enflameth our love unto God, in sense of his gracious illapses, thence rendring us willing to endure any want or pain for his sake, or at his appointment.

It in fine doth minister a ravishing delight, abundantly able to supply the defect of any other pleasures, and to allay the smart of any pains whatever; rendring thereby the meanest estate more acceptable and pleasant, than any prosperity without it can be. So that if we be truly devout we can hardly be discontent: It is discomfiting from God by a neglect of devotion, or by a negligence therein, that doth expose us to the incursions of worldly regret and sorrow.

These are general Remedies and Duties both in this and all other regards necessary, the which yet we may be induced to perform in contemplation of this happy fruit (contentedness) arising from them. Farther,

4. It serveth toward production of contentedness to reflect much upon our imperfection, unworthiness and guilt; so as thereby to work in our hearts a lively sense of them, and a hearty sorrow for them; this will divert our sadness into its right channel, this will drown our lesser grief by the influx of a greater. It is the nature of a greater apprehension or pain incumbent to extinguish in a manner, and swallow up the sense of a lesser, although in it self grievous; as he that is under a fit of the stone doth scarce feel a pang of the gout; he that is assaulted by a wolf will not regard the biting of a flea. Whereas then of all evils and mischiefs moral evils are incomparably far the greatest, in nature the most ugly and abominable, in consequence the most hurtful and horrible; seeing (in St. Chrysostome's language)

Excepting sin, there is nothing grievous or terrible among humane things; not poverty, not sickness, not disgrace, not that which seemeth the most extream of all evil, death it self; those being names only among such as philosophate, names

of calamity, void of reality; but the real calamity this, to be at variance with God, and to do that which displeaseth him; seeing evidently according to just estimation no evil beareth any proportion to the evil of Sin, if we have a due sense thereof, we can hardly be affected with any other accident: If we can keep our minds intent upon the heinous nature, and the lamentable consequences of Sin, all other evils cannot but seem exceedingly light and inconsiderable; we cannot but apprehend it a very silly and unhandsome thing to resent or regard them: What (shall we then judge) is poverty in comparison to the want of a good conscience? what is Sickness compared to distemper of mind, and decay of spiritual strength? what is any disappointment to the being defeated and overthrown by temptation? what any loss to the being deprived

Psalm. 77. 2. 27. 8. 105. 4. 62. 8.

1 Sam. 1. 15. Psalm. 55. 22.

1 Pet. 5. 7. Psalm. 5. 8. 27. 11. 31. 3.

43. 3. 139. 24. 143. 10. 61. 2.

Jer. 31. 9.

Psalm. 16. 11.

Psalm. 94. 19.

Isa. 26. 3.

Psalm. 73. 26.

69. 16. 23. 4.

71. 20.

Οὐδὲν δεινὸν τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ, ἀλλ' ἡ ἀμαρτία μόνη ἐπενία, ἡ νόσος, ἡ ὕβρις, ἡ ἐπὶ τῇ ψυχῇ, ἡ ἀτιμία, ἡ ἐξορία.
Chrys. ἀνθρ. ε'. τ' 6.

Vid. ad Olymp. Ep. 13. ad Theod. 1.

of God's love and favour? what any disgrace to the being out of esteem and respect with God? what any unfaithfulness or inconstancy of friends to having deserted or betrayed our own soul? what can any danger signify to that of eternal misery, incurred by offending God? what pressure can weigh against the load of guilt, or what pain equal that of stinging remorse? In fine, what condition can be so bad as that of a wretched sinner? any case surely is tolerable, is desirable, is lovely and sweet in comparison to this: Would to God, may a man in this case reasonably say, that I were poor and forelorn as any beggar; that I were covered all over with botches and blains as any *Lazar*; that I were bound to pass my days in an hospital or a dungeon; might I be chained to an oar, might I lye upon the rack, so I were clear and innocent: Such thoughts and affections if reflecting on our sinful doings and state do suggest and impress, what place can there be for repentment of other petty crosses?

Contrition also upon this score is productive of a certain sweetness and joy apt to quash or to allay all worldly grief: as it worketh a *salutary repentance* *not to be repented of*, so it therewith breedeth a satisfactory comfort, which doth ever attend repentance: He that is very sensible of his guilt, cannot but consequently much value the remedy thereof, mercy; and thence earnestly be moved to seek it; then in contemplation of divine goodness, and considering God's gracious promises, will be apt to conceive faith and hope, upon his imploring mercy, and resolution to amend; thence will spring up a chearful satisfaction, so possessing the heart, as to expel or to exclude other displeasures: A holy and a worldly sadness cannot well consist together.

5. Another good instrument of contentedness is sedulous application of our minds to honest employment. Honest studies and cares divert our minds, and drive sad thoughts from them: They chear our spirits with wholesome food and pleasant entertainments; they yield good fruits, and a success accompanied with satisfaction, which will extinguish or temper discontent: While we are studious or active, discontent cannot easily creep in, and soon will be stifled.

Idleness is the great mother and the nurse of discontent; it layeth the mind open for melancholly conceits to enter; it yieldeth harbour to them, and entertainment there; it depriveth of all the remedies and allays which business affordeth.

Reciprocally discontent also begetteth idleness, and by it groweth: They are like ice and water, arising each out of the other: We should therefore not suffer any sadness so to encroach upon us, as to hinder us from attending to our business (the honest works and studies of our calling) for it thereby will grow stronger and more hardly vincible.

6. A like expedient to remove discontent is good company. It not only sometimes ministreth advices and arguments for content, but raiseth the drooping spirit, erecting it to a loving complaisance, drawing it out towards others in expressions of kindness, and yielding delight in those which we receive from others, infecting us by a kind of contagion with good humour, and instilling pleasant *Idea's* into our fancy, agreeably diverting us from sad and irksome thoughts: Discontent affecteth retirement and solitude, as its element and food; good company partly starveth it by smothering sad thoughts, partly cureth it by exhilarating discourse. No man hardly can find displeasure, while friendly conversation entertaineth him; no man returneth from it without some refreshment and ease of mind.

7. Having right and lowly conceits of our selves is a most sure guardian and procurer of content: For answerable to a man's judgment of himself are his resentments of the dealing he meeteth with from God or man. He that thinks meanly as he ought of himself, will not easily be offended at any thing; any thing, will he think, is good enough for me; I deserve nothing from God, I cannot deserve much of man; if I have any competence of provision for my life, any tolerable usage, any respect, it is more than my due, I am bound to be thankful: But he that conceiteth highly (that is vainly) of himself, nothing will satisfy him; nothing, thinks he, is good enough for him, or answerable to his deserts; no body can yield him sufficient respect; any small neglect disturbeth

2 Cor. 7. 10.
Vid. Chrys. ad
Demet. & ad
Steletch. Tom.
6.

Mater me ge-
nuit.

Ἀγαθὴ δὲ
παραίτασις
ἐστὶν ἐταίρα.

sturbeth and enrageth him; he cannot endure that any man should thwart his interest, should cross his humour, should dissent from his opinion; Hence seeing the world will not easily be induced to conceit of him as he doth of himself, nor to comply with his humours and pretences, it is impossible that he should be content.

8. It conduceth to this purpose to contemplate and resent the publick state of things, the interest of the World, of our Country, of God's Church. The sense of publick calamities will drown that of private, as unworthy to be considered or compared with them. The sense of publick prosperity will allay that of particular misfortune. How (will a wise and good man say) can I desire to prosper and flourish, while the State is in danger or distress? how can I grieve, seeing my Country is in good condition? is it just, is it handsome that I should be a Non-conformist either in the publick sorrow or joy? Indeed,

9. All Hearty Charity doth greatly alleviate discontent. If we bear such a good will to our Neighbour as to have a sincere compassion of his evils, and complacence in his good, our case will not much afflict us. If we can appropriate and enjoy the prosperity, the wealth, the reputation of our Neighbour, by delighting in them, what can we want; what can displease us? If our heart be enlarged in pity for the misfortunes of others, it cannot be contracted with grief for our own: Our sorrow, like water, being thus diffused, cannot be so deep but it will be more fruitful; it will produce such effects as will comfort and please us; It is a stingy selfishness which maketh us so very sensible of crosses, and so incapable of comfort.

10. Again, if we will attain contentment, we must take heed of setting our affection upon any worldly thing whatever, so as very highly to prize it, very passionately to affect it, very eagerly to pursue it; so as to conceive our happiness in any measure to hang on it, or stick thereto: If there be any such thing, we shall be disappointed in the acquitt, or the retention of it; or we shall be dissatisfied in its enjoyment.

So to adhere in affection to any thing is an adulterous disloyalty toward our Maker and best Friend; from which it is expedient that we should be reclaimed; whence God (in just anger, or in kind mercy) will be apt to cross us in our attempts to get it, or to deprive us of its possession; whence the displeasure will follow, which always attendeth a separation from things we love. But if we be suffered to obtain or to retain it, we shall soon find dissatisfaction therein; being either disgusted with some bitterness in it (such as doth lurk in every sensible good) or being cloyed with its lasciviousness: it after a small enjoyment will become either distastful or insipid.

This, according to continual experience, is the nature of all things, pleasant only to sense or fancy, presently to satiate: No beauty can long please the eye, no melody the ear, no delicacy the palate, no curiosity the fancy; a little time doth waste away, a small use doth wear out the pleasure, which at first they afford: Novelty commendeth and ingratiateth them; distance representeth them fair and lovely; the want or absence of them rendreth them desirable; but the presence of them dulseth their grace, the possession of them deadneth the appetite to them.

New objects with a gentle and grateful touch warble upon the corporeal organs, or excite the spirits into a pleasant frisk of motion; but when use hath levigated the organs, and made the way so smooth and easie that the spirits pass without any stop, those objects are no longer felt, or very faintly; so that the pleasure ceaseth.

Only those things which reason (religious and sound reason) doth approve, do yield a lasting (undecaying, unalterable) satisfaction; if we set our affections on them, we cannot fail of content: In seeking them we cannot be disappointed, for God (without any reservation or exception) hath promised to bestow them upon those who seriously and diligently seek them: nor can we be dispossessed of them; God will not take them away, and they lie beyond the reach of any other hand: Having them then we cannot but fully and durably be satisfied in the fruition of them; the longer we have them, the more we shall like them; the more we taste them, the better we shall relish them: time wasteth

wasteth not, but improveth the sense of their unfading beauty and indefectible sweetness.

11. It is of great influence toward contentedness with an earnest and impartial regard to contemplate things, as they are in themselves, divested of tragical appearances, in which they are wrapt by our own inconsiderate fancy, or which vulgar prejudices do throw upon them: As all things, looked upon by the corporeal eye through a mist, do seem bigger than in reality they are, so to the eye of our mind all things (both good and evil) seem hugely enlarged, when viewed through the foggs of our dusky imagination, or of popular conceit. If we will esteem that very good, which with a gay appearance dazzleth our imagination, or which the common admiration and applause of men recommendeth, the most vain and worthless, the most dangerous, the most mischievous things often will appear such; and if we please to account those things greatly bad which look ugly or horridly to imagination, which are defamed by the injudicious part of men; or which men commonly do loath, do fret at, do wail for, we shall take the best, most innocent, most useful, most wholesome things for such, and accordingly these errors of our minds will be followed by a perverse practice, productive of dissatisfaction and displeasure to us. No man ever will be satisfied, who values things according to the price which fancy setteth on them, or according to the rate they bear in the common market; who distinguisheth not between good and famous, bad and infamous; who is affected accordingly with the want of those things, which men call good, with the presence of those which they term bad.

But if we judge of things as God declareth, as impartial and cautious reason dictateth, as experience diligently observed (by their fruits and consequences) discovereth them to be, we shall have little cause to be affected by the want, or presence of any such thing which is wont to produce discontent.

12. We should to this purpose take especial care to search out through our condition, and pick thence the good that is therein, making the best we can of it, enjoying and improving it; but what is inconvenient or offensive therein declining it, diminishing it, tempering it so well as we may, always forbearing to aggravate it. There are in nature divers simples, which have in them some part, or some juice very noxious, which being severed and cast away, the rest becometh wholesome food; neither indeed is there any thing in nature so venomous, but that from it by art and industry may be extracted somewhat medicinal, and of good use, when duly applied, so in most apparent evils lieth inclosed much good, which if we carefully separate (casting away the intermixed dross and refuse) we shall find benefit, and taste comfort thence; there is nothing so thoroughly bad, as being well ordered, and opportunely ministered will not do us much good: So if from poverty we cast away or bear quietly that which a little pincheth the sense, or grateth on the fancy, and enjoy the undistractedness of mind, the liberty, the leisure, the health, the security from envy, obloquy, strife, which it affordeth, how satisfactory may it become to us? The like conveniencies are in disgrace, disappointment, and other such evils, which being improved may endear them to us: Even Sin it self (the worst of evils, the only true evil) may yield great benefits to us; it may render us sober and lowly in our own eyes, devout in imploring mercy, and thankful to God for it; merciful and charitable toward others in our opinions and censures; more laborious in our good practice, and watchful over our steps: And if this deadly poison well administered yieldeth effects so exceedingly beneficial and salutary, what may other harmless (through unhand-some, and unpleasant) things do, being skilfully managed?

13. It is a most effectual means of procuring content, and curing discontent, to rowse and fortify our faith in God, by, with most serious attention, reflecting upon the arguments and experiments, which assure us concerning God's particular providence over all, over us. It is really infidelity (in whole, or in part, no faith, or a small and weak faith) which is at the root, as of all sin, so particularly of discontent: For how is it possible, did we firmly believe, and with any measure of attention consider that God taketh care of us, that he tendereth our good, that he is ready at hand to succour us, (how then, I say, is it possible) that we should fear any want, or grievously resent any thing

thing incident? But we like St. Peter are ὀλιγόπιστοι, of *little faith*, therefore we cannot *walk on the sea*; but in despair sink down: Sometimes our faith is buried in oblivion or carelessness; we forget, or mind not that there is a Providence; but look on things as if they fell out casually or fatally; thence expect no redress from Heaven, so tumble into despair and disconsolateness. Sometimes because God doth not in our time and our way relieve us or gratify us we slip into profane doubt, questioning in our hearts whether he doth indeed regard us, or whether any relief is to be expected from him; not considering, that only God can tell when and how it is best to proceed; that often it is not expedient our wishes should be granted; that we are not wise enough, or just enough to appoint or chuse for our selves; that it is impossible for God to gratify every man; that it would be a mad World, if God in his government thereof should satisfy all our desires.

We forget how often God hath succoured us in our needs and straits, how continually he hath provided for us; how patiently and mercifully he hath born with us, what miracles of bounty and mercy he hath performed in our behalf; we are like that distrustful and inconsiderate people, who *remembered not the hand of God, nor the day when he delivered them; remembered not the multitude of his mercies; but soon forgot his works, and waited not for his counsel; They forgot God their Saviour, who had done great things in Egypt, wondrous works in the land of Ham, and terrible things in the red Sea.* Psal. 78. 42. Psal. 106. 7. 13. 21.

From such dispositions in us our discontents do spring; and we cannot cure them, but by recollecting our selves from such forgetfulness and negligence; by shaking off such wicked doubts and distrusts; by fixing our hearts and hopes on him, who alone can help us; who is *our strength, the strength of our heart, of our life, of our salvation.* Psal. 22. 19. 46. 1. 81. 1. 59. 7. 144. 1. Psal. 73. 26. 27. 1. 140. 7.

Of him (to conclude) let us humbly implore, that he in mercy would bestow upon us grace to submit in all things to his Will, to acquiesce in all his dispensations, gladly to embrace and undergo whatever he alloteth to us; in every condition, and for all events befalling us heartily to adore, thank and bless him: Even so to the Ever-blessed God, our gracious maker and preserver, be eternally rendered all glory, thanksgiving and praise. *Amen.*

S E R M O N X.

Of PATIENCE.

I P E T. ii. 21.

Because also Christ suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his Steps.

IN these Words two things appear especially observable; a duty implied (the *duty of patience*) and a reason expressed, which enforceth the practice of that duty (the *example of Christ*.) We shall (using no more Preface, or circumstance) first briefly, in way of explication and direction, touch the duty it self, then more largely describe, and urge the example.

The word *patience* hath, in common usage, a double meaning, taken from the respect it hath unto two sorts of objects, somewhat different. As it respecteth provocations to anger, and revenge by injuries, or discourtesies, it signifieth a disposition of mind to bear them with charitable meekness; as it rela-

teth to adversities and crosses disposed to us by providence, it importeth a pious undergoing and sustaining them. That both these kind of patience may here be understood, we may, consulting and considering the context, easily discern: that which immediately precedeth, *If when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable to God*, relateth to good endurance of adversity; that which presently followeth, *who when he was reviled, reviled not again, when he suffered he threatned not*, referreth to meek comporting with provocations: The Text therefore, as it looketh backward, doth recommend the patience of adversities, as forward; the patience of contumelies. But seeing both these objects are reducible to one more general, comprizing both, that is, things seeming evil to us, or offensive to our sense, we may so explicate the duty of patience, as to include them both.

Patience then is that virtue, which qualifieth us to bear all conditions, and all events, by God's disposal incident to us, with such apprehensions and persuasions of mind, such dispositions and affections of heart, such external deportments, and practices of life, as God requireth, and good reason directeth. Its nature will, I conceive, be understood best by considering the chief acts which it produceth, and wherein especially the practice thereof consisteth; the which briefly are these.

1. A thorough persuasion, that nothing befalleth us by fate, or by chance, or by the meer agency of inferiour causes, but that all proceedeth from the dispensation, or with the allowance of God, (that, *Affliction doth not come forth of the dust, nor doth trouble spring out of the ground*; but that all, both good and evil proceedeth out of the mouth of the most high) according as David reflected, when Shimei reviled him; *Let him* (saith the good King) *curse, because the Lord hath said unto him, Curse David*; and as Job, when he was spoiled of all his goods, acknowledged, *The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away*.

2. A firm belief, that all occurrences (however adverse and cross to our desires) are well consistent with the justice, wisdom and goodness of God; so that we cannot reasonably disapprove, repine at, or complain of them; but are bound and ready to avow with the Psalmist, that *All his paths are mercy and truth*; *He is righteous in all his ways and holy in all his works*; to judge and say with Hezekiah, *Good is the word of the Lord, which thou hast spoken*; to confess with David unto him, *I know, O Lord, that thy judgments are right; and that thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me*.

3. A full satisfaction of mind, that all (even the most bitter, and sad accidents) do (according to God's purpose) tend and conduce to our good; acknowledging the truth of those divine Aphorisms; *Happy is the man whom God correcteth; whom the Lord loveth he correcteth, even as a Father the Son, in whom he delighteth. As many as I love, I rebuke, and chasten*.

4. An entire submission, and resignation of our wills to the will of God; suppressing all rebellious insurrections, and grievous resentments of heart against his providence; which may dispose us heartily to say after our Lord, *Let not my will, but thine be done*; with good Eli, *It is the Lord, Let him do what seemeth him good*; with David, *Here I am, let him do to me as seemeth good to him*; yea even with Socrates, *If so it pleaseth God, so let it be*.

5. Bearing adversities calmly, chearfully and courageously; so as not to be discomposed with anger, or grief; not to be put out of humour, not to be dejected or disheartened; but in our disposition of mind to resemble the primitive Saints, who were *ὡς λυπήμενοι ἀλλ' ὧς χαίροντες*, as grieved, but always rejoicing; who took joyfully the spoiling of their goods, who accounted it all joy when they fell into divers tribulations.

6. A hopeful confidence in God for the removal or easement of our afflictions, and for his gracious aid to support them well; agreeable to those good rules and precepts? *It is good that a man should both hope, and wait quietly for the salvation of the Lord; Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him; wait on the Lord, be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart*; according to the pattern of David, who, in such a case, thus roused and staid himself: *Why art thou cast down, O my soul, and why art thou disquieted within me? hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise him for the help of his countenance*;

nance; and after the holy *Apostles*, who in their most forlorn estate could say, *We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed.* 2 Cor. 4. 8.

7. A willingness to continue, during God's pleasure, in our afflicted state, without weariness, or irksome longings for alteration; according to that advice of the wise Man, *My son, despise not the chastening of the Lord, neither be weary of his correction;* and that of the *Apostle*, back'd with our Lord's example; *Considering him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest we be weary, and faint in our minds.* Prov. 3. 11. Heb. 12. 3.

8. A lowly frame of mind (that is, being sober in our conceits of our selves, sensible of our unworthiness, and meanness, of our natural frailty, penury and wretchedness; of our manifold defects and miscarriages in practice; being meek and gentle, tender and pliable in our temper and frame of spirit; being deeply affected with reverence and dread toward the awful majesty, mighty power, perfect justice and sanctity of God; all this) wrought by our adversity effectually, according to its design, quelling our haughty stomach, softning our hard hearts, mitigating our peevish humours; according to St. *Peter's* injunction, *Be humbled under the mighty hand of God;* and God's own approbation joined with a gracious promise, *To this man will I look; even to him that is of a poor and contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word.* 1 Pet. 5. 6. Ez. 66. 2.

9. Restraining our Tongues from all discontentful complaints and murmurings, all prophane, harsh, unfavoury expressions, importing displeasure, or dissatisfaction in God's dealing toward us, arguing desperation or distrust in him; such as were those of the impatient and incredulous *Israelites*; *They spake against God, and said, can God furnish a table in the wilderness? behold he smote the rock, that the waters gushed out, and the streams overflowed; can he give bread also, can he provide flesh for his people?* Such as they used, of whom the *Prophet* said — *When they shall be hungry, they will fret themselves, and curse their King, and their God;* such as they were guilty of, whom St. *Jude* called *γοιγυστας καὶ μεμψιμοιγεῖς, murmurers, and querulous persons,* (or such as found fault with their lot) that which is stiled, *charging God foolishly;* for abstaining from which (notwithstanding the pressure of his most grievous calamities) *Job* is commended (where 'tis said, *Job sinned not, neither charged God foolishly*) that which the *Prophet* condemneth as unreasonable in that expostulation; *Wherefore doth the living man complain?* In such cases we should smother our passions in a still and silent demeanour, as the *Psalmist* advised, and as he practised himself: *I was dumb (saith he) and opened not my mouth, because it was thy doings.* Lam. 3. 49. Psal. 37. 7. 46. 10. 4. 4. Psal. 39. 9.

10. Blessing and praising God (that is, declaring our hearty satisfaction in God's proceedings with us, acknowledging his wisdom, justice and goodness therein, expressing a grateful sense thereof, as wholesome and beneficial to us) in conformity to *Job*, who, upon the loss of all his comforts, did thus vent his mind: *The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.* Job 1. 21.

11. Abstaining from all irregular and unworthy courses toward the removal, or redress of our crosses; chusing rather to abide quietly under their pressure, than by any unwarrantable means to relieve or relaxe our selves; contentedly wearing, rather than violently *breaking our yoke, or bursting our bonds;* rather continuing poor, than striving to enrich our selves by fraud or rapine; rather lying under contempt, than by sinful or sordid compliances attempting to gain the favour and respect of men; rather embracing the meanest condition, than labouring by any turbulent, unjust, or uncharitable practices to amplify our Estate; rather enduring any inconvenience, or distress, than *setting our faces toward Egypt,* or having recourse to any succour which God disalloweth; according to what is replied in that reprehension of St. *Paul*, *Now therefore it is utterly a fault among you, because ye go to Law one with another; Why do ye not rather take wrong; why do ye not rather suffer your selves to be defrauded?* and in that advice of St. *Peter*; *Let them that suffer according to the will of God, commit the keeping of their souls to him in well-doing, as unto a faithful creator.* Jer. 5. 5. Jer. 42. 15. 1 Cor. 6. 7. 1 Pet. 4. 19.

12. A fair behaviour toward the instruments and abettors of our affliction; those who brought us into it, or who detain us under it, by keeping off re-

lief, or sparing to yield the succour which we might expect; the forbearing to express any wrath or displeasure, to exercise any revenge, to detain any grudge, or enmity toward them; but rather even upon that score bearing good-will, and shewing kindness unto them; unto them, not only as to our brethren, whom according to the general law of charity we are bound to love, but as to the Servants of God in this particular case, or as to the instruments of his pleasure toward us, considering that by maligning or mischiefing them, we do signifie ill resentment of God's dealings with us, and in effect through their sides, do wound his Providence: Thus did the *pious King* 2 Sam. 16. 7. demean himself, when he was bitterly reproached, and cursed by *Shimei*; not suffering (upon this account) any harm or requital to be offered to him; thus 1 Cor. 4. 12. did the holy *Apostles*, who *being reviled did bless, being persecuted did bear it, being defamed did intreat*; thus did our Lord deport himself toward his spiteful adversaries, who *being reviled did not revile again; when he suffered did not threaten, but committed it to him that judgeth righteously.* 1 Pet. 2. 23. 3. 9.

13. Particularly in regard to those, who by injurious and offensive usage, do provoke us; patience importeth,

1. That we be not hastily, over-easily, not immoderately, not pertinaciously incensed with anger toward them; according to those divine Precepts, and Aphorisms; *Be slow to wrath; Be not hasty in thy spirit to be angry; for anger resteth in the bosom of fools. Give place to wrath* (that is, remove it.) Jam. 1. 19. Ecclef. 7. 9. Prov. 16. 32. 14. 17. 29. *Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil-speaking be put away from you, with all malice. Cease from anger, let go displeasure, fret not thy self any-wise to do evil.* Rom. 12. 19. Eph. 4. 31. 26. Coloss. 3. 8. Matt. 5. 21. 24. Psal. 37. 8.

2. That we do not in our hearts harbour any ill-will, or ill-wishes, or ill-designs toward them, but that we truly desire their good, and purpose to further it, as we shall have ability and occasion; according to that Law (even Levit. 19. 18. charged on the *Jews*) *Thou shalt not bear any grudge against the children of thy people; but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thy self*; and according to that noble command of our Saviour; *Love your enemies, pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you.* Matt. 5. 44. Luke 6. 27.

3. That in effect we do not execute any revenge, or for requital do any mischief to them, either in word or deed; but for their reproaches exchange blessings (or good words and wishes) for their outrages repay benefits and good turns; according to those Evangelical Rules; *Do good to them that hate you, Bless them that curse you: Bless them that persecute you, bless and curse not: See that none render evil for evil: Be pitiful, be courteous, not rendring evil for evil, or railing for railing, but contrariwise blessing: If thine enemy hunger feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: Say not I will do to him as he hath done to me; I will render to the man according to his work: Say thou not I will recompense evil, but wait on the Lord, and he shall save thee.* Matt. 5. 44. 39. Rom. 12. 14. 1 Theff. 5. 15. 1 Pet. 3. 9. Prov. 25. 21. Rom. 12. 20. Prov. 24. 29. 20. 22.

14. In fine, Patience doth include and produce a general meekness and kindness of affection, together with an enlarged sweetness, and pleasantness in conversation and carriage toward all men; implying, that, how hard soever our case, how sorry or sad our condition is, we are not therefore angry with the World, because we do not thrive, or flourish in it; that we are not dissatisfied, or disgusted with the prosperous estate of other men; that we are not become fullen or froward toward any man, because his fortune excelleth ours; but that rather we do *rejoice with them that rejoice*; we do find complacence and delight in their good success, we borrow satisfaction and pleasure from their enjoyments.

In these and the like acts, the practice of this virtue (a virtue, which all men, in this state of inward weakness, and outward trouble, shall have much need and frequent occasion to exercise) consisteth; unto which practice, even Philosophy, natural reason, and common sense do suggest many inducements; the tenour of our holy Faith and Religion do supply more and better; but nothing can more clearly direct, or more powerfully excite thereto, than that admirable example, by which our Text doth enforce it: Some principal of those rational inducements we shall cursorily touch, than insist upon this example.

It will generally induce us to bear patiently all things incident, if we consider, That it is the natural right and prerogative of God to dispose of all things, to assign our station here, and allot our portion to us; whence it is a most wrongful insolence in us, by complaining of our state, to contest his right, or impeach his management thereof: That we are obliged to God's free bounty for numberless great benefits and favours; whence it is vile ingratitude to be displeased for the want of some lesser inconveniencies: That God having undertaken, and promised to support and succour us, it is a heinous affront to distrust him, and consequently to be dissatisfied with our condition: That seeing God doth infinitely better understand what is good for us, that we can do; he is better affected toward us, and more truly loveth us than we do our selves; he with an unquestionable right hath an uncontrollable power to dispose of us, it is most reasonable to acquiesce in his choice of our state: That since we have no claim to any good, or any pleasure, and thence in withholding any, no wrong is done to us, 'tis unjust and frivolous to murmur, or grumble; since we are by nature, God's servants, it is fit the appointment of our rank, our garb, our diet, all our accommodations, and employments in his family, should be left entirely to his discretion and pleasure: That we being grievous Sinners, *less than the least of God's mercies*, meriting no good, but deserving sore punishment from him, it is just, that we should be highly content and thankful for any thing on this side death and damnation: That our afflictions, being the natural fruits and results of our choice, or voluntary miscarriages, it is reasonable we should blame our selves rather than pick quarrels with Providence for them. That our condition, be it what it will, cannot, being duly estimated, be extremely bad, or insupportably grievous; for that as no condition here is perfectly and purely good (not deficient in some accommodations, not blended with some troubles) so there is none that hath not its conveniences and comforts; for that it is our fond conceits, our froward humours, our perverse behaviours, which create themischiefs adherent to any state; for that also how forlorn soever our case is, we cannot fail, if we please, of a capacity to enjoy goods far more than countervailing all possible want of these goods, or presence of these evils; we may have the use of our reason, a good conscience, hope in God, assurance of God's love and favour, abundance of spiritual blessings here, and a certain title to eternal glory and bliss hereafter; which if we can have, our condition cannot be deemed uncomfortable. That indeed our adversity is a thing very good and wholesome, very profitable and desirable, as a means of breeding, improving and exercising the best virtues, of preparing us for, and entitling us to the best rewards: That our state cannot ever be desperate, our adversity probably may not be lasting (there being no connexion between the present and the future, vicissitudes being frequent, all things depending on the arbitrary dispensation of God, who doth always pity us, and is apt to relieve us.) That however our affliction will not outlive our selves, and certainly must soon expire with our life. That this World is not a place of perfect convenience, or pure delight; we come not hither to do our will, or enjoy our pleasure, we are not born to make laws, or pick our condition here; but that *trouble is natural and proper to us* (*We are born thereto, as Job 5. 7. the sparks flie upwards.*) *No tribulation seizeth us, but such as is humane;* 1 Cor. 10. 13. whence 'tis reasonable that we contentedly bear the crosses suitable to our nature and state. That no adversity is in kind, or degree, peculiar to us; but if we survey the conditions of other men (of our brethren every where, of our neighbours all about us) and compare our case with theirs, we shall find, that we have many comforts and associates in adversity, most as ill, many far worse bestead than our selves; whence it must be a great fondness and perverseness to be displeased that we are not exempted from, but exposed to bear a share in the common troubles and burthens of mankind. That it hath particularly been the lot of the best men (persons most excellent in virtue, and most deep in God's favour) to sustain adversity; and it therefore becometh us willingly and chearfully to accept it. That, in fine, patience it self is the best remedy to ease us in, to rescue us from adversity, for it cannot much annoy us, if we bear it patiently; God will, in mercy, remove it, if we please him, by demeaning our selves well under it; but that impatience doth not

not at all conduce to our relief, doth indeed exasperate, and augment our pain: Such considerations may induce us to a patience in general respecting all sorts of evils.

There are also reasons particularly disposing to bear injuries and contumelies from men calmly and meekly, without immoderate wrath, rancorous hatred, or spiteful revenge toward them: Because they do proceed from divine providence, disposing or permitting them (for the trial of our patience, the abasing our pride, the exercising of some other virtue, or for other good purposes) to fall upon us: Because vindication of misdemeanours committed against us doth not appertain to us; we not being competent Judges of them, nor rightful executors of the punishments due to them; God having reserved to himself the right of decision, and power of execution: *Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord, I will repay it.* Because we are obliged to interpret charitably the actions of our neighbour, supposing his miscarriages to proceed from infirmity, from mistake, or from some cause, which we should be rather inclinable to excuse, than to prosecute with hatred, or revenge. Because indeed our neighbours most culpable offences, as issuing from distemper of mind, are more reasonably the objects of compassion, and charity, than of anger, or ill-will. Because we are bound to forgive all injuries by the command of God, and in conformity to his example, who passeth by innumerable most heinous offences committed against himself: *Gracious is the Lord, and full of compassion, slow to anger, and of great mercy; long-suffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth;* so must we be also, if we will be like him, or please him. Because we our selves, being subject to incur the same faults in kind, or greater in value, do need much pardon, and should thence be ready to allow it unto others; both in equity, and in gratitude toward God; lest that in the Gospel be applied to us; *O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me; shouldst not thou also have had compassion upon thy fellow-servant, even as I had pity on thee?* Because God hath made it a necessary condition of our obtaining mercy; promising us favour if we yield it, menacing us extremity, if we refuse it: *If ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly father will also forgive you; But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your father forgive your trespasses.* Because our neighbour suffering by our revenge in any manner (in his body, interest, or reputation) doth not any-wise profit us, or benefit our estate, but needlessly doth multiply and encrease the stock of mischief in the World; yea commonly doth bring farther evil upon our selves, provoking him to go on in offending us, rendring him more implacably bent against us, engaging us consequently deeper in strife and trouble: Because no wrong, no disgrace, no prejudice we can receive from men is of much consequence to us, if our mind be not disorder'd, if we are free from those bad passions, which really are the worst evils that can befall us. Because, in fine, impatience it self is insignificant, and ineffectual to any good purpose; or rather produceth ill effects: It doth not cure our wound, or assuage our grief; it removeth no inconvenience, nor repaireth any damage we have received; but rather enflameth our distemper, and aggravateth our pain; more really indeed molesting and hurting us, than the injury or discourtesie which causeth it: Thus briefly doth reason dictate to us the practice of all patience.

But the example proposed by the *Apostle* here, and elsewhere by St. Paul (Let the same mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus—) by the *Apostle* to the Hebrews (Let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith—) by our Lord himself (Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly) that doth in a more lively manner express how in such cases we should deport our selves, and most strongly engageth us to comply with duties of this nature. Let us now therefore describe it, and recommend it to your consideration.

The example of our Lord was indeed in this kind the most remarkable that ever was presented, the most perfect that can be imagined: He was, above all expression, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; he did undertake, as to perform the best works, so to endure the worst accidents, to which

Rom. 12. 19.
Heb. 10. 30.
Deut. 32. 35,
36.
Vid. Tert. de
pat. cap. 10.

Psal. 145. 8.
86. 15.

Matt. 18. 32.

Matt. 6. 14.
Ecclus 8. 2.
Matt. 18. 35.
Mark 11. 25.

Idcirco quis te laedit ut doleas, quia frus-
trus ludentis in dolore laesi est. Tert. de
pat. 8.

Si patientia incubabo, non dolebo; si non
dolebo, ultisci non desiderabo. Ib. 10.

Vid. Tertul.
de Pat. c. 3.
Cypr. de Pat.
T. 2. p. 315.
Ila. 53. 3.

which humane nature is subject; his whole life being no other than one continual exercise of patience, and meekness, in all the parts, and to the utmost degrees of them: If we trace the footsteps of his life, from the sordid Manger to the bloody Cross, we shall not be able to observe any matter of complacency, scarce any of comfort (in respect to his natural or worldly state) to have befallen him.

His parentage was mean, to appearance, and his birth, in all exteriour circumstances, despicable: *Is not this the Carpenter's Son?* were words of contempt and offence, upon all occasions thrown upon him. Matt. 13. 55.
Mark 6. 3.

His life was spent not only in continual labour, and restless travel, but in hard poverty, yea in extream penury, beneath the state, not only of the meanest Men, but of the most shifting Beasts: *The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.* Matt. 8. 20.

For his necessary subsistence we find him often destitute of ordinary provision (as when he sought food from the barren Fig-tree) often indebted for it to the courtesie, and (as it were) alms of the vilest people, of *Publicans and Sinners*: so *δι' ἡμᾶς ἐπιώχλυσε* he was (as the *Apostle* saith) *a beggar for us.* Matt. 21. 18.
19.
Nullus mensam, redimere despect. Tert. 2 Cor. 8. 9.

Yet may we never perceive him any-wise discontented with, or complaining of his condition; not discouraged, or depressed in spirit thereby, not solicitously endeavouring any correction or change thereof; but willingly embracing it, heartily acquiescing therein; and notwithstanding all its inconveniences, cheerfully discharging his duties, vigorously pursuing his main designs of procuring glory to God, and benefit to men.

Nor did he only with content undergo the incommodities of a poor estate, but he was surrounded with continual dangers; the most powerful men of those times (enraged with envy, ambition and avarice) desperately maligning him; and being incessantly attentive upon all occasions to molest, hurt and destroy him: *The world* (as he saith himself, that is all the powerful and formidable part of the World) *hating me*; Yet did not this any-wise dismay, or distemper him, nor cause him either to repine at his condition, or decline his duty. He utterly disregarded all their spiteful machinations, persisting immovable in the prosecution of his pious and charitable undertakings, to the admiration of those who observed his demeanour: *Is not this he* (said they) *whom they seek to kill? but loe he speaketh boldly.* John 15. 18.
John 7. 25.

He did indeed sometimes opportunely shun their fury, and prudently did elude their snares, but never went violently to repel them, or to execute any revenge for them; improving the wonderful power he was endued with, altogether to the advantage of mankind, never to the bane or hurt of his malicious enemies. Luke 4. 30.
Matt. 21. 27.
22. 18.

Sensible enough he was of the causeless hatred they bare him; (*ἐμίσησαν με δωρεάν*, *They*, said he, *have hated me for nothing*;) and of their extream ingratitude; yet never could he be provoked to resent, or requite their dealing; see how mildly he did expostulate the case with them; *Then* (saith St. John) *the Jews took up stones to stone him: Jesus answered them, Many good things have I shewed you from my Father, for which of those do ye stone me?* John 15. 25.
John 10. 31.

To be extremely hated, and inhumanely persecuted without any fault committed, or just occasion offered, is greatly incensive of humane passion; but for the purest, and strongest good-will, for the most unexpressible beneficence, to be recompensed with most virulent reproaches, most odious slanders, most outrageous misuages, How exceeding was that meekness, which without any signification of regret, or disgust, could endure it?

Out of most tender charity, and ardent desire of their salvation, he instructed them, and instilled heavenly doctrine into their minds, what thanks, what reward did he receive for that great favour? to be reputed, and reported an Impostour: *πλανᾷ τ' ὄχλον*, he (said they) *doth impose upon the people.* Matt. 23. 37.
John 7. 12.
Matt. 27. 63.

He took occasion to impart the great blessing of pardon for Sin to some of them, confirming his authority of doing it by a miraculous work of goodness: How did they resent such an obligation? by accounting him a blasphemers: *Behold* (saith St. Matthew) *certain of the Scribes said within themselves, this man blasphemeth*: Which most harsh and uncharitable censure of theirs he did not

Ingratos curavit, insidiatoribus cessit. Tert.

not fiercely reprehend, but calmed discussed, and refuted by a clear reasoning; *τί ἐνδυμῆδε ποιεῖτε; Wherefore conceive ye evil in your hearts; for whether is easier to say, thy sins are forgiven thee, or to say, arise and walk?* that is, Is it not credible that he, who can perform the one, may dispense the other?

Acts 10. 38.

Matt. 9. 34.
12. 24.

Matt. 10. 25.

Matt. 12. 25.

He freed them from most grievous diseases, yea rescued them from the greatest mischief possible in nature, being possessed by the unclean Fiend; How did they entertain this mighty benefit? by most horrible calumny accusing him of Sorcery, or conspiracy with the Devil himself: *The Pharisees said, he casteth out devils by the prince of the devils:* yea thence attributing to him the very name and title of the grand Devil: *If they have called the Master of the house Beelzebub, how much more (shall they defame) them of his household?* Yet this most injurious defamation he no otherwise rebuked, than by a mild discourse, strongly confuting it; *Every Kingdom (said he) divided against itself is brought to desolation—and if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how then shall his Kingdom stand?* that is, the Devil better understands his interest, than to assist any man in dispossessing himself.

John 12. 38.

He did constantly labour in reclaiming them from error and sin, in converting them to God and goodness, in proposing fair overtures of grace and mercy to them, in shewing them by word and practice the sure way to happiness; What issue was there of all his care and pains? What, but neglect, distrust, disappointment, rejection of himself, of what he said, and what he did? *Who hath believed our report, and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?* was a Prophecy, abundantly verified by their carriage toward him.

These, and the like usages, which he perpetually did encounter, he constantly received without any passionate disturbance of mind, any bitter reflections upon that Generation, any revengeful enterprises against them; yea requited them with continued earnestness of hearty desires, and labourious endeavours for their good.

Luke 4. 24.

Matt. 13. 57.

We might observe the ingrateful disrespects of his own Countreymen, and Kindred toward him, which he passeth over without any grievous disdain; rather excusing it, by noting that entertainment to have been no peculiar accident to himself, but usual to all of like employment; *No Prophet (said he) is acceptable in his own country.*

Non illi saltem civitati qua eum recipere noluerat iratus est, cum etiam discipuli tam contumelioso oppido caelestes ignes representari voluissent. Tert.

We might also mention his patient suffering repulses from strangers; as when being refused admittance into a *Samaritan Village*, and his Disciples being incensed with that rude discourtesie, would have fire called down from Heaven

Luke 9. 53, 56.

to consume those Churls, he restrained their unadvised wrath, and thus expressed his admirable meekness; *The Son of man is not come to destroy mens lives, but to save them.*

* Luke 9. 41.

Matt. 17. 17.

Non peccatores,

non publicanos,

aspernatus est.

Tert.

Matt. 8. 26.

14. 31.

We might likewise remark his meek comporting with the stupid and * perverse incredulity of his Disciples, notwithstanding so many pregnant, and palpable inducements continually exhibited for confirmation of their faith; the which he no otherwise, than sometime gently, admonisheth them of, saying, *τί δεῖλοί ἐστε ὀλιγόπιστοι; Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? ὀλιγόπιστε, τί ἐδίστασας; O thou of small faith, why didst thou doubt?*

What should I insist on these, although very remarkable instances? since that one scene of his most grievous (shall I say, or glorious) passion doth represent unto us a perfect and most lively image of the highest patience and meekness possible; of the greatest sorrow that ever was or could be, yet of a patience surmounting it; of the extreamest malice that ever was conceived, yet of a charity overwaying it; of injury most intolerable, yet of a meekness willingly and sweetly bearing it: There may we observe the greatest provocations from all hands to passionate animosity of spirit, and intemperate heat of speech, yet no discovery of the least disorderly, angry, or revengeful thought, the least rash, bitter or reproachful word, but all undergone with clearest serenity of mind, and sweetness of carriage toward all persons.

To Judas, who betrayed him, How doth he address himself? Doth he use such terms as the Man deserved, or as passion would have suggested, and reason would not have disallowed: Did he say, Thou most perfidious Villain, thou

thou monster of iniquity and ingratitude; thou desperately wicked Wretch; Dost thou, prompted by thy base covetousness, treacherously attempt to ruin thy gracious Master, and best Friend; thy most benign and bountiful Saviour? No, instead of ~~such~~ proper language, he used the most courteous and endearing terms: *Ἐταίρε, ἐπ' ὃ πάρεαι*; *Friend (or companion) for what dost thou come*; Matt. 26. 50. Or, what is thy business here? a tacite charitable warning there is to reflect upon his unworthy and wicked action, but nothing apparent of wrath, or reproach.

From his own disciples and servants, who had beheld his many miraculous works, and were indebted to him for the greatest favours, he reasonably might have expected a most faithful adherence, and most diligent attendance on him in that juncture; yet he found them careless, and slothful: What then? How did he take it? Was he angry, did he upbraid, did he storm at them? Did he threaten to discard them? No; he only first gently admonisheth them: *What, could ye not watch one hour with me?* then a little exciteth them, *Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation*: He withal suggested an excuse for their drowsiness and dulness; *The Spirit is willing but the flesh is weak*; in fine, he indulgeth to their weakness, letting them alone, saying, *καθύετε λοιπόν, Sleep on now and take your rest.*

When he foresaw they would be offended at his (to appearance) disastrous estate, and fearfully would desert him, he yet expressed no indignation against them, or decrease of affection toward them upon that score; but simply mentioneth it, as unconcerned in it, and not affected thereby. Matt. 26. 31.

And the unworthy Apostasie of that Disciple, whom he had especially favoured and dignified, he only did mildly forewarn him of, requiting it foreseen by the promise of his own effectual prayers for his support and recovery; and when St. Peter had committed that heinous fact, our good Lord only *looked* Luke 22. 61, on him with an eye of charity and compassion; which more efficaciously 62. struck him, than the most dreadful threat, or sharp reprehension could have Ἐνέλεψε τοῦ Πέτρου. done; *Peter thereupon went out and wept bitterly.*

When the High-Priests officer, upon no reasonable occasion, did injuriously and ignominiously strike him, he returned only this mild expostulation: *If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil; if well, why smitest thou me?* John 18. 23¹ Cypr. Ep. 65. That is, I advise thee to proceed in a fair and legal way against me, not to deal thus boisterously and wrongfully, to thy own harm.

Even careful and tender he was of those, who were the instruments of his suffering; he protected them from harm, who conducted him to execution; as we see in the case of the High-Priests servant, whom (with more zeal, Luke 22. 51, than wherewith he ever regarded his own safety) he defended from the fury of 62. his own friend, and cured of the wounds received in the way of persecuting himself.

All his demeanour under that great Trial was perfectly calm, not the least regret or reluctance of mind, the least contradiction, or obloquy of speech appearing therein; such it was as became *the lamb of God*, who was to *take away the sins of the world*, by a willing oblation of himself; such as did exactly correspond to the ancient Prophecies; *He was oppressed, and he was afflicted,* Isa. 53. 7. *yet he opened not his mouth; he was brought as a Lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before the shearer is dumb, so he opened not his mouth; and I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair; I hid not my face from shame and spitting.* Isa. 50. 6.

Neither did the wrongful slanders devised and alledged against him by suborned witnesses, nor the virulent invectives of the Priests, nor the barbarous clamours of the people, nor the contemptuous spitting upon him, and buffeting him, nor the cruel scourgings, nor the contumelious mockeries, nor all the bloody tortures inflicted upon him, wring from him one syllable importing any dissatisfaction in his case, any wrath conceived for his misuses, any grudge or ill-will in his mind toward his persecutors; but on the contrary, instead of hatred and revenge he declared the greatest kindness and charity toward them, praying heartily to God his Father for the pardon of their sins. Instead of aggravating their crime and injury against him, he did in a sort extenuate and excuse it, by consideration of their ignorance and mistake.

Luke 23. 34. *Lord, (said he, in the height of his sufferings) forgive them, for they know not what they do.* The life they so violently bereaved him of, he did willingly mean to lay down for the ransom of their lives; the blood they spilt he wished to be a salutary Balsam for their wounds and maladies; he most chearfully did offer himself by their hands a sacrifice for their offences. No small part of his afflictions was a sense of their so grievously displeasing God, and pulling mischief on their own heads, a foresight of his kind intentions being frustrated by their obstinate incredulity and impenitence, a reflection upon that inevitable vengeance, which from the divine Justice would attend them; this foreseen did work in him a distasteful sense, (more grievous than what his own pain could produce) and drew from him tears of Compassion (such as no repentment of his own case could extort) for, *When he was come near he beheld the City, and wept over it, saying, O that thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace.*

Luke 19. 41.
13. 34.

If ever he did express any commotion of mind in reference to this matter, it was only then when one of his friends, out of a blind fondness of affection, did presume to dissuade him from undergoing these evils; then indeed being somewhat moved with indignation he said to St. Peter, *Get thee behind me, Satan, for thou art an offence unto me; for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men.*

Matt. 16. 23.

Neither was it out of a stupid insensibility or stubborn resolution that he did thus behave himself; for he had a most vigorous sense of all those grievances, and a strong (natural) aversion from undergoing them; as those dolorous Agonies wherewith he struggled, those deadly groans he uttered, those monstrous lumps of Blood he sweet out, those earnest Prayers he made to be freed from them, declare; but from a perfect submission to the Divine Will, and entire command over his Passions, an excessive Charity toward Mankind, this patient and meek behaviour did spring: *The Cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it? O my Father, if it be possible, let this Cup pass from me; nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt; Let not my will, but thine be done. No man taketh away my life, but I lay it down of my own accord; I will give my flesh for the life of the world:* So doth our Lord himself express the true grounds of his passion and his patience.

Matt. 26. 37.
38.
Luke 22. 44.
John 12. 27.
Matt. 26. 39.
Heb. 5. 7.

John 18. 11.
Matt. 26. 39.
Luke 22. 42.
John 10. 18.
6. 51.

Such is the Example of our Lord; the serious consideration whereof how can it otherwise than work patience and meekness in us; If he, that was *the Lord of Glory* (infinitely excellent in Dignity and Virtue) did so readily embrace, did so contentedly endure such extremities of penury, hardship, disgrace and pain, how can we refuse them or repine at them? Can we pretend to a better lot than he received, or presume that God must deal better with us than he did with his own dearest Son? Can we be displeased at a conformity to our Lord and Master? Can we without shame affect to live more splendidly, or to fare more deliciously than he chose to do? Shall we fret or wail, because our desires are crossed, our projects defeated, our interests any-wise prejudiced; when as his most earnest desires, and his most painful endeavours had so little of due and desired success: When he was ever ready, and had so constant occasion to say, *Let not my will be done?* Can we despise that state of meanness and sorrow which he from the highest sublimities of Glory and Beatitude was pleased to stoop unto? Can we take our selves for the want of any present conveniences or comforts to be wretched, when as the fountain of all happiness was destitute of all such things, and scarce did ever taste any worldly pleasure? Are we fit or *worthy to be his Disciples*, if we will not *take up his Cross and follow him*; if we will not go to his School (that School wherein he is said himself to have *learnt obedience*) if we will not con that lesson which he so loudly hath read out, and transcribe that Copy which he fairly hath set before us: Can we pretend to those great benefits, those high privileges, those rich and excellent rewards, which he hath attained for us, and which he proposeth to us, if we will not go on toward them in that way of patience which he hath trod before us?

Luke 14. 27.
9. 23.
Matt. 10. 38.
16. 24.
Heb. 5. 8.

Heb. 2. 9, 10.
Phil. 2. 9.
Heb. 12. 3.

Can we also, if we consider him that endureth such contradiction of sinners, be transported with any wrathful or revengeful passion, upon any provocation from our brethren? Can we hope, or wish for better usage from men than our

our Lord did ever find? Can we be much displeased with any man for thwarting our desires or interests, for dissenting from our conceits, for crossing our humours, when as he (to whom all respect and observance was due) did meet with so little regard or compliance in any way; continually did encounter repulses, disappointments, oppositions from the perverse and spiteful world? Can we be very jealous of our Credit, or furious when our imaginary honour (honour, that we never really deserved, or can justly claim, being guilty of so many great faults and sins) is touched with the least disgraceful reflection, if we do well observe and mind, that the most truly, and indeed only honourable personage (only honourable, because only innocent person) that ever was had his reputation aspersed by the most odious reproaches, which deepest Envy and Malice could devise, without any grievous resentment, or being solicitous otherwise to assert or clear it than by a constant silence? Can we be exasperated by every petty affront, (real or supposed) when the most noble, most courteous, most obliging person that ever breathed upon earth was treacherously exposed to violence by his own servant, shamefully deserted by his own most beloved friends, despitefully treated by those whom he never had offended, by those upon whom he had heaped the greatest benefits, without expressing any anger or displeasure against them, but yielding many signal testimonies of tenderest pity and love toward them? Can we see our Lord treated like a slave and a thief, without any disturbance or commotion of heart; and we vile wretches upon every slight occasion swell with fierce disdain, pour forth reproachful language, execute horrible mischief upon our brethren? He indeed was surrounded with injuries and affronts; every sin that since the foundation of things hath been committed was an offence against him, and a burthen upon him; (*God laid upon him the iniquities of us all*) Ira. 53. 6. so many declared enemies, so many Rebels, so many Persecutors, so many Murtherers he had as there have lived men in the World; for every sinner did in truth conspire to his affliction and destruction; we all in effect did betray him, did accuse him, did mock, did scourge, did pierce and crucifie him; yet he forgave all offences, he died for all persons; *while we were yet enemies,* Rom. 5. 6, 8, 10. *yet sinners, he died for us,* to rescue us from death and misery: And shall we not then in imitation of him, for his dear sake, in gratitude, respect and obedience to him, be ready to bear the infirmities of our brethren, to forgive any small wrongs or offences from them; whatever they do to us, to love them, and do them what good we can? If so admirable a pattern of patience and meekness so immense cannot, what is there that can oblige or move us? I conclude with those doxologies to our so patient and meek Redeemer:

Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb for ever and ever. Apoc. 5. 12, 13.

Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us Kings and Priests unto God and his Father, to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen. Apoc. 1. 5.

S E R M O N XI.

REJOYCE EVERMORE.

I T H E S S. v. 16.

Rejoyce evermore.

R*Rejoyce evermore!* O good Apostle, how acceptable Rules dost thou prescribe? O blessed God, how gracious Laws dost thou impose? This is a Rule to which one would think all men should be forward to conform: This is a Law, which it may seem strange that any man should find in his heart to disobey: for what can any Soul desire more than to be always on the merry pin, or to lead a life in continual alacrity? who readily would not embrace a Duty, the observance whereof is not only pleasant, but pleasure it self? Who is so wild as to affect a sin, which hath nothing in it but disease and disgust?

Eccl. 8. 15.
2. 24. 3. 12.
22. 5. 18, 26.

That joy should be enjoined, that sadness should be prohibited, may it not be a plausible exception against such a Precept, that it is superfluous and needless, seeing all the endeavours of men do aim at nothing else, but to procure joy and eschew sorrow; seeing all men do conspire in opinion with *Solomon*, that *a man hath nothing better under the sun than—to be merry?* Were it not rather expedient to recommend sober sadness, or to repress the inclinations of men to effuse mirth and jollity?

Eccl. 1. 14.

So it may seem; but yet alas, if we consult experience, or observe the World, we shall find this Precept very ill obeyed; for do we not commonly see People in heavy dumps; do we not often hear doleful complaints? is not this World apparently a stage of continual trouble, and grief? Did not the Preacher, upon a diligent survey of *all the works done under the Sun*, truly proclaim, *Behold all is vanity and vexation of Spirit?* Where, I pray, is any full or firm content; where is solid and durable joy to be found?

It is true that men, after a confused manner, are very eager in the quest, and earnest in the pursuit of joy; they rove through all the Forest of Creatures, and beat every bush of Nature for it, hoping to catch it either in natural endowments and improvements of Soul, or in the gifts of Fortune, or in the acquits of Industry; in Temporal Possessions, in sensual Enjoyments, in ludicrous diversifements and amusements of Fancy; in gratification of their Appetites and Passions: They all hunt for it, though following a different scent, and running in various tracks, some in way of plodding for rare notions, some in compassing ambitious projects, some in amassing heaps of wealth, some in practice of over-reaching subtilties, some in wreaking their malice, their revenge, their envy; some in venting frothy conceits, bitter scoffs, or profane raiilleries; some in jovial conversation and quaffing the full bowls; some in musick and dancing; some in gallantry and courting; some in all kinds of riotous excess, and wanton dissoluteness; so each in his way doth incessantly prog for joy; But all much in vain, or without any considerable success; finding at most instead of it some faint shadows, or transitory flashes of pleasure; the which depending on causes very contingent and mutable, residing in a frail temper of fluid humours of body, consisting in slight touches upon the organs of sense, in frisks of the corporeal spirits, or in fumes and vapours twitching the imagination, do soon flag and expire; their short enjoyment being also tempered with regret, being easily dashed by any cross accident, soon declining into a nauseous satiety, and in the end degenerating into gall and bitter

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ter remorse; for *Even* (as *Solomon* observed) *in laughter, the heart is sorrowful, and the end of that mirth is heaviness*; and *Though* (as it is said in *Job*) *wickedness is sweet in the mouth* — yet *his meat in his bowels is turned, it is the gall of Asps within him*: So that indeed the usual delights, which men affect are such, that we should not if we could, and we could not if we would constantly entertain them; such *rejoycing evermore* being equally unreasonable and impossible.

Wherefore there is ground more than enough, that we should be put to seek for a true, substantial, and consistent joy; it being withal implied, that we should affect it in another way, or look for it in another box, than commonly men do; who therefore are so generally disappointed, because they would have it upon impossible or undue terms; and least expect it there, where it is only to be had.

It is a scandalous misprision, vulgarly admitted, concerning Religion, that it is altogether fullen and sour, requiring a dull, lumpish, morose kind of life, barring all delight, all mirth, all good humour: Whereas on the contrary it alone is the never-failing source of true, pure, steady joy; such as is deeply rooted in the heart, immoveably founded in the reason of things, permanent like the immortal spirit wherein it dwelleth, and like the eternal objects, whereon it is fixed; which is not apt to fade, or cloy; and is not subject to any impressions apt to corrupt, or impair it: Whereas in our Text, and in many Texts parallel to it, we see, that our Religion doth not only allow us, but even doth oblige us to be joyful as much and often as can be, not permitting us to be sad for one Minute, banishing the least fit of Melancholly, charging us in all times, upon all occasions to be chearful; supposing consequently that it is in some manner possible to be so, and affording power to effect what it doth require.

Such indeed is the transcendent goodness of our God, that he maketh our delight to be our duty, and our sorrow to be our sin, adapting his holy Will to our principal instinct; that he would have us to resemble himself as in all other perfections, so in a constant state of happiness; that as he hath provided a glorious Heaven of bliss for us hereafter, so he would have us enjoy a comfortable paradise of delight here. He accordingly hath ordered the whole frame of our religion in a tendency to produce joy in those who embrace it; for what is the Gospel, but (as the holy Angel, the first promulger of it, did report) *good tidings of great joy to all people*? How doth God represent himself therein, but as *the God of love, of hope, of peace, of all consolation*, chearfully smiling in favour on us, graciously inviting us to the most pleasant enjoyments, bountifully dispensing most comfortable blessings of mercy, of grace, of salvation to us? for what doth our Lord call us to him, but *that he may give us rest, and refreshment to our souls*; that he may *wipe away all tears from our eyes*; that he may save us from most woful despair, and settle us *in a blessed hope*; that we may *enter into our Master's joy*; that *our joy may be full*, and such as *no man can take from us*?

What is the great overture of the Gospel, but the gift of a most blessed Comforter, to abide with us for ever, chearing our hearts with his lightsome presence, and ravishing consolations? Wherein doth the Kingdom of Heaven consist? *not in meat and drink, but in righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost*? What are the prime fruits sprouting from that root of Christian Life, the Divine Spirit? they are, as St. Paul telleth us, *Love, joy and peace*: Are there not numberless declarations importing a joyful satisfaction granted to the observers of God's Commandments; that *Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart*? Doth not our Lord pronounce a special beautitude to the Practiser of every virtue? And if we scan all the Doctrines, all the Institutions, all the Precepts, all the Promises of Christianity, will not each appear pregnant with matter of joy, will not each yield great reason, and strong obligation to this duty of *rejoycing evermore*?

Wherefore a Christian, as such, (according to the design of his Religion, and in proportion to his compliance with its dictates) is the most jocund, blith, and gay person in the World; always in humour, and full of chear; continually

Prov. 14. 13.
Sunt quadam tristes voluptates — Sen.
Ep. 67.
Job 20. 12. — 14. 20. 5.

Quaquaersum se verterit anima hominis, ad dolores figitur alibi, praterquam in te. Aug. Conf. 4. 10.

Luke 2. 10.

Rom. 5. 33.

13. 5.

Eph. 2. 4.

2 Cor 1. 3.

13. 11.

1 Pet. 5. 10.

Jam. 5. 11.

Matt. 11. 28.

Apoc. 7. 17.

21. 4.

Tit. 2.

Matt. 25. 21.

John 15. 11.

16. 22. 24.

John 14. 16.

Rom. 14. 17.

Gal. 5. 22.

Psal. 97. 11.

118. 15. 32.

11. 68. 3.

tinually bearing a mind well satisfied, a light heart and calm spirit, a smooth brow and serene countenance, a grateful accent of speech, and a sweetly composed tenour of carriage: No black thought, no irksome desire, no troublesome passion should lodge in his breast; any furrow, any ~~mark~~, any cloud doth sit ill upon his face; the least fretful word, or froward behaviour doth utterly misbecome him: If at any time it appear otherwise, 'tis a deflection from his character; tis a blemish and wrong to his profession; it argueth a prevarication in his judgment, or in his practice; He forgetteth that he is a Christian, or hath not preserved the innocence belonging to that Name. For, If a Christian remembreth what he is, or is sensible of his condition; if he reflecteth on the Dignity of his Person, the Nobleness of his Relations, the sublimity of his Privileges, the greatness and certainty of his Hopes, how can he be out of humour? Is it not absurd for him that is at peace with Heaven, with his own Conscience, with all the World; for the possessor of the best goods, and the Heir of a blessed immortality; for the Friend, the Favourite, the Son of God, to fret or wail?

He that is settled in a most prosperous state, that is (if he pleaseth) secure of its continuance, that is well assured of its improvement; that hath whatever good he can wish in his reach, and more than he can conceive in sure reversion, what account can be given that he should be sad, or seem afflicted?

He that hath the unexhaustible spring of good for his portion, that hath his welfare entrusted in God's most faithful hand; that hath God's infallible word for his support; that hath free access to him, *in whose presence is fulness of joy*; that hath frequent tastes of God's goodness, in gracious dispensations of Providence, in intercourses of devotion, in the influences of grace; that hath the infinite beauty and excellency for the perpetual object of his contemplation and affection; that enjoyeth the serenity of a sound mind, of a pure heart, of a quiet conscience, of a sure hope, what can he want to refresh or comfort him?

If a true and perfect Christian hath no care to distract him, having discharged all his concerns on God's Providence; If he hath no fear to dismay him, being guarded by the Almighty protection from all danger and mischief; If he hath no despair to sink him, having a sure refuge in the divine mercy and help; If he hath no superstitious terrors or scruples to perplex him, being conscious of his own upright intentions to please God, and confident of God's merciful willingness to accept his sincere endeavours; If he hath no incurable remorse to torment him, the stings of guilt being pulled out by the merits of his Saviour, applied by his faith and repentance: If he hath no longing desires to disquiet him, being fully satisfied with that he doth possess, or may expect from God's bounty; all other things being far beneath his ambition, or coveting: If he hath no contentions to enflame him, knowing nought here worth passionately striving for, and being resolved to hold a friendly good-will toward all men; If he hath no repining envy, seeing that none can be more happy than he may be, and that every man's good by charity is made his own; If he hath no fretful discontent, since he gladly doth acquiesce in the condition, and success allotted to him, resigning his will to God's pleasure, taking all for best which thence doth occur, being assured that *all things shall work together for his good* and advantage: If he hath no spiteful rancours to corrode

his heart, no boisterous passions to ruffle his mind, no inordinate appetites, perverse humours, or corrupt designs to distemper his soul, and disturb his life, whence then may sorrow come, or how can sadness creep into him?

Ἐπιθυμία ἀπελαθείας εὐδίας ἢ
ψυχῇ καὶ γυναικὶσιν γίνεται. Just. Mart.
ad Grac. Paran. 2.

What is there belonging to a Christian, whence grief naturally can spring? from God, *our exceeding joy*, the Fountain of Happiness; from Heaven, the region of light and bliss; from divine truth, which illustrateth and cheareth the soul; from God's Law, which *rejoiceth the heart*, and is *sweeter than honey and the honey-comb*; from wisdom, whose *ways are ways of pleasantness, and all whose paths are peace*; from virtue, which cureth our afflictive distempers, and composeth our vexatious passions; from these things, I say, about which a Christian as such is only conversant, no sorrow can be derived; from those sweet sources no bitter streams can flow; But hell, the flesh, the world, darkness,

Psal. 43. 4.

Psal. 119. 103.
Prov. 3. 17.

darkness, error, folly, sin and irreligion (things with which a Christian should have nothing to do, from which he should keep a-loof, which he doth pretend utterly to renounce and abandon) these, these alone, are the parents of discomfort and anguish.

Wherefore there is the same reason, the same obligation, the same possibility, that we should rejoyce evermore, as that we should always be Christians, exactly performing duty, and totally forbearing sin; for innocence and indolency do ever go together, both together making Paradise; perfect virtue and constant alacrity are inseparable companions, both constituting beatitude; And as although from our infirmity we cannot attain the highest pitch of virtue, yet we must aspire thereto, endeavouring to *perfect holiness in the fear of God*; so though it may not be possible to get, yet it is reasonable to seek perpetual joy; which doing in the right way we shall not fail of procuring a good measure of it. 2 Cor. 7. 1.
Matt. 5. 48.
1 John 3. 3.

Indeed to exercise piety and to rejoyce are the same things, or things so interwoven, that nothing can disjoin them; religious practice is like that river, the streams whereof make glad the City of God, the holy place of the Tabernacle of the most High, that is, every pious soul: No good deed can be performed without satisfaction; each virtue hath a peculiar delight annexed to it; whence the acts of joy, which upon various objects, grounds, and occasions, we may exert, being numberless, I shall only touch a few principal instances. Psal. 46. 4.

I. We should evermore rejoyce in the exercise of our faith; according to that prayer of our Apostle for the Romans, *Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing*. Rom. 15. 13.

Every kind of faith (that which embraceth divine truths, that which applieth God's mercy, that which ensureth God's promises, that which confideth in God's providence, each of them) is a clear spring of joy, ever standing open to us; which he that drinketh, *shall never thirst*. Joh. 6. 35 7.
38. 4. 14.

1. The faith, which embraceth God's heavenly truth, doth not only enlighten our minds, but is apt to affect our hearts; there being no Article of Faith, or mystery of our religion, which doth not involve some great advantage, some notable favour, some happy occurrence dispensed to us by the goodness of God, the which Faith doth apprehend and convey to our spiritual gust, so that we cannot hardly *but receive the word with joy*. For is it not very sweet with Faith to contemplate the rich bounty of God in the Creation of the World, and producing so goodly a Frame, so copious a store of things, with a special regard to our sustenance and accommodation? Is it not satisfactory to believe that God by his Almighty hand and vigilant care, with the same benign regard doth uphold and govern the same? Is it not extremely pleasant with faith to reflect on that great honour and happiness, which God did vouchsafe to confer on mankind, by sending down from Heaven his only Son to assume our nature, and to converse with men, that we might be advanced to a *participation of the divine nature*, and to an enjoyment of *communion with God*? How without great delight can we be perswaded, that our Saviour by his meritorious obedience and passion hath appeased God's wrath, and inclined his favour toward us, hath satisfied justice, hath expiated our offences, hath ransomed and rescued our souls from the dominion of Sin and Satan, from death and corruption, from Hell and everlasting torment; hath purchased immortal life, and endless bliss for us? What comfort is there in being assured by the resurrection, and triumph of our Lord over death, that our souls are indeed immortal, that our bodies shall be raised from the dust, that our persons are capable of an eternal subsistence in happiness? will it not much please us with an eye of faith to behold our Redeemer sitting in glorious exaltation at God's right hand, governing the World for the benefit of his Church, dispensing benediction and grace to us; interceding as our *merciful and faithful High priest* for the pardon of our sins, the acceptance of our prayers, the supply of our needs, and the relief of our distresses; If we be fully convinced, that our Lord Jesus is the Christ, our Lord and Saviour, *the author of eternal Salvation to all that obey him*, how can we otherwise than follow those, of whom St. Peter saith, *Whom having not seen ye love; in whom,* Matt. 13. 20.
Phil. 1. 25.
2 Pet. 1. 4.
1 John 1. 3.
Heb. 2. 17.
1 John 2. 1.
Heb. 5. 9.
1 Pet. 1. 8.

whom, though ye now see him not; yet believing ye rejoyce with joy unspeakable, and full of glory: So from the hearty belief of every Evangelical Truth we may suck consolation; each of them is food to our Soul; and to believe it is to eat it; which how can we do without a delicious, or most ~~flavoury~~ relish?

2. At least methinks that faith greatly should exhilarate us, which applieth those verities (so *worthy of all acceptation*) wherein God doth open his arms wide to embrace us, proposing most kind invitations, and favourable overtures of mercy, upon the fairest terms possible; together with effectual remedies for all the maladies and miseries of our souls: for if we are sensible of our heinous Guilts, if we are laden with the heavy burthen of our sins, if our heart is galled with fore compunction of our misdeeds; if we are struck with the *terrors of the Lord*, and *tremble with the fear of God's judgments*; how comfortable must it be to be perswaded that God is fully reconcileable to us, is very desirous to shew us mercy, and gladly will accept our repentance; that *we have an advocate with the Father*, who *hath propitiated for our sins*, doth mediate for our peace, hath both full power and certain will, if we sincerely do renounce our offences, wholly to remit them? so that *there is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit*; and that *being justified by faith we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ*; Will not this belief revive us, and *make the broken bones to rejoyce*? will not the Gospel of peace be hence in truth a *joyful sound* to us? might it not hence well be proclaimed in the Prophet, *Comfort ye, Comfort ye my people; speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her; that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned*.

And if we find our selves in habit of soul grievously distempered, labouring under great impotency and blindness, overborn and oppressed with the prevalency of corruption, pestered with unreasonable desires and passions, unable to curb our inclinations and appetites, to resist temptations, to discharge our duty in any tolerable measure, or with any ease; is it not then comfortable to believe, that we have a most faithful and skilful Physician at hand to cure our distempers; that we have a powerful succour within ken, to relieve our infirmities; that God is ready to impart an abundant supply of grace, of light, of spiritual strength to direct and assist us; that if any man doth lack *wisdom*, he is encouraged *with faith to ask it of God, who giveth liberally and upbraideth not*? if any man want strength, God's Almighty Spirit is promised to those, who with humble earnestness do implore it; so that we may *be able to do all things* (incumbent on us) *by Christ who strengtheneth us*.

3. And what more hearty satisfaction can we feel, than in a firm perswasion concerning the real accomplishment of those *exceedingly great and precious promises*, whereby we become capable of the most excellent privileges, the most ample benefits, the most happy rewards, that can be? how can the belief that by God's infallible word, or as surely as truth it self is true, an eternal inheritance of a treasure that cannot fail, of a glory that cannot fade, of a kingdom that cannot be shaken, of a felicity surpassing all expression and all conceit, is reserved for us, in recompence of our faithful obedience; how, I say, can that be a dead, dull, dry belief, void of sprightly comfort and pleasure?

Likewise the faith of confidence in God's good providence, and paternal care over us, (whatever our condition or circumstances be) should infuse a chearful refreshment of heart into us.

It is in holy Scripture most frequently asserted, that he who placeth his trust in God, is a very blessed and happy Person; and can we without great satisfaction partake of that beatitude?

Can we by such a trust disburthen all our solicitous cares, all our anxious fears, all the troubles of our spirit, and pressures of our condition upon God, with strong assurance, that from his mighty power and watchful care, in due time, in the most expedient manner, we shall receive a competent supply of our wants, a riddance from our grievances, a protection from all danger and harm, a blessing upon all our good endeavours and undertakings, without feeling much ease and peace in our hearts?

What

What can be more chearing than a perswasion, that all our concerns are lodged in the hands of such a Friend, so wise, so able, so faithful, so affectionate, so ever readily disposed to help us, and further our good? They who trust in God, are said to abide under the shadow of the Almighty, and to be covered with his wings; God is often styled their rock, their fortrefs, their shield and buckler, their defence and refuge; And are they not then impreg-
Psal. 91. 1.
Psal. 61. 4.
91. 4. 57. 1.
17. 8. 36. 7.
18. 2. 62. 2.
Psal. 112. 2.
Psal. 63. 7.
Psal. 28. 7.
(Psal. 33. 21.)
nably safe? why then should they fear any disaster? at what occurrence should they be disturbed? Have they not huge reason to say with the Psalmist, *In the shadow of thy wings will I rejoyce; The Lord is my strength and my shield, my heart trusteth in him, and I am helped; therefore my heart danceth for joy, and in my Song will I praise him*: May not each of those confiders in God well repress all insurrections of trouble and grief, with that holy charm, *Why art thou so vexed, O my soul, and why art thou so disquieted within me, O trust in God — for he is the health of my countenance, and my God.*
Psal. 42. 14.
43. 5.

II. We should evermore rejoyce in the practice of Christian hope, making good that aphorism of Solomon, *The hope of the righteous shall be gladness*; and obeying those Apostolical injunctions, that we should *rejoyce in hope*; that we should *retain the confidence, and therejoycing of hope firm to the end*. Those excellent and most beneficial truths, those sweet proposals of grace and mercy, those rich promises, which faith doth apprehend as true in a general reference to all Christians, hope doth appropriate, and apply as particularly touching our selves; improving the knowledge of our common capacity into a sense of our special interest in them. God, faith our Faith, will assuredly receive all penitent Sinners to mercy, will crown all pious Christians with glory, will faithfully perform whatever he hath graciously promised to all People, hath a tender care for all that love and fear him; But God, faith our hope, will have mercy on me, will render to me the wages of righteousness, will verify his good word to me his servant, will protect, will deliver, will bless me in all exigencies: If so, being conscious of our sincere endeavour to serve and please God; if discerning, from a careful reflection upon our heart and ways, that in some good measure, with fidelity and diligence we have discharged the conditions required of us, we can entitle our selves to God's special affection, we can accommodate his word to our case, we can assume a propriety in his regard, how can we forbear conceiving joy?

All hope, in proportion to the worth of its object, and the solidity of its ground, is comfortable; it being the anchor of the soul, which stayeth and supporteth it in undisturbed rest; it appeasing unquiet desires, it setting absent goods before us, and anticipating future enjoyments by a sweet foretast; Seeing then if we have a good Conscience, and our heart doth not condemn us, our hope is grounded on the rock of ages (on the immutable nature, and the infallible word of God) seeing it is the hope of the most worthy, the most sublime, the most incomparable and inestimable goods, it must be most extremely delightful.

If it much pleaseth men to conceit themselves next heirs of a fair estate, to have the reversion of a good office, to be probable expectants of a great preferment (although death may intercept, or other accidents may obstruct the accomplishment of such hopes) how much more shall that lively hope (of which St. Peter speaketh) of an inheritance, incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in Heaven for us; who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, (which hope therefore can never be dashed or defeated) breed a most chearful satisfaction, far transcending all other pleasures, which spring from the most desirable fruitions here; according to that admonition of our Lord, *Notwithstanding in this rejoyce not that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoyce that your names are written in Heaven.*

III. We should evermore rejoyce in the performing the duty of Charity; both that which we owe to God, and that which is due to our Neighbour.

Love is the sweetest and most delectable of all Passions; and when by the conduct of wisdom it is directed in a rational way toward a worthy, congruous, attainable object, it cannot otherwise than fill the heart with ravishing delight.

And such (in all respects superlatively such) an object is God: He infinitely beyond all other things deserveth our affection, as most perfectly amiable and desireable, as having obliged us by innumerable and inestimable benefits, all the good that we have ever enjoyed, or that we can ever expect, being derived from his pure bounty; all things in the World in competition with him, being pitifully mean, ugly and loathsome; all things without him, being vain, unprofitable, and hurtful to us; so that the *Psalmist* might well say, *Who in Heaven can be compared unto the Lord? who among the sons of the mighty can be likened unto the Lord? whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I can desire beside thee.* He is the most proper object of our love; for we chiefly were framed, and it is the *prime law* of our nature, to love him; our Soul from original instinct vergeth toward him as its centre, and can have no rest till it be fixed on him; he alone can satisfy the vast capacity of our minds, and fill our boundless desires.

Psal. 89. 6.

Psal. 73. 25.

Matt. 22. 38.

He of all lovely things, most certainly and easily may be attained; for whereas commonly men are crossed in their affection, and their love is embittered from their affecting things imaginary, which they cannot reach, or coy things, which disdain and reject their affection; it is concerning God quite otherwise; for,

John 6. 37.

Psal. 70. 4.

2 Cor. 5. 20.

John 14. 21,

23.

Apoc. 3. 20.

1. John 4. 19

Rom. 8. 28.

1 Cor. 2. 9.

He is most ready to impart himself, and *will not reject any that cometh unto him*; He most earnestly desireth, and woeth our love; He is not only most willing to correspond in affection, but doth prevent us therein; for *we love him*, (saith the *Apostle*) *because he first loved us.*

He doth cherish and encourage our love by sweetest influences, and most comfortable embraces, by kindest expressions of favour, by most beneficial returns, ordering that *all things shall work together for good to those who love him*: And whereas all other objects do in the enjoyment much fail our expectation, he doth ever far exceed it.

1 Cor. 6. 17.

Acts 11. 23.

Deut. 10. 20.

John 15. 4, 6.

Psal. 5. 12.

Psal. 36. 7.

Psal. 63. 3.

Wherefore in all affectionate motions of our hearts toward God, in desiring him, or seeking his favour and friendship; in embracing him, or setting our esteem, our good-will, our confidence on him; in enjoying him by devotional meditations, and addressees to him; in a reflective sense of our interest and propriety in him; in that mysterious union of spirit, hereby we do closely adhere to him, and are (as it were) inserted in him; in a hearty complacence in his benignity, a grateful resentment of his kindness, and a zealous desire of yielding some requital for it, we cannot but feel very pleasant transports, assuring to us the truth of that saying in the *Psalm*, *They that love thy name shall be joyful in thee*; and disposing us to cry out with the *Psalmist*, *How excellent is thy loving-kindness, O Lord; because thy loving-kindness is better than life, my lips shall praise thee.*

Indeed that celestial flame (kindled in our hearts by the spirit of love) cannot be void of warmth; we cannot fix our eyes upon infinite beauty, we cannot taste infinite sweetness, we cannot cleave to infinite felicity, without we should also perpetually rejoyce in the first daughter of love to God, charity toward men; the which in complection and cheerful disposition doth much resemble its mother: For it doth rid all those gloomy, keen, turbulent imaginations and passions, which cloud our mind, which fret our heart, which discompose the frame of our soul; (from burning anger, from storming contention, from gnawing envy, from rankling spite, from racking suspicion, from distracting ambition and avarice.) It consequently doth settle our mind in an even temper, in a sedate humour, in an harmonious order, in that pleasant state of tranquillity, which naturally doth result from the voidance of irregular passions.

And who can enumerate or express the pleasures which do wait on every kind, on each act of Charity?

How triumphant a joy is there in any-wise doing good? whereby we feed good humour, and gratify our best incinations, whereby we oblige our brethren and endear our selves to them, whereby we most resemble the divine goodness, and attract the divine favour?

2 Cor. 9. 7.

Rom. 12. 8.

St. *Paul* telleth us, that *God loveth the cheerful giver*; and he prescribeth, that *he who sheweth mercy*, should do it *εὐλαβῶντι*, with merriness; And in the

the Law it is commanded, *Thine heart shall not grieve, when thou givest to thy poor brother*; And who indeed can out of charity give alms, or shew mercy, without chearfulness? seeing that he thereby doth satisfy his own mind, and doth ease his own bowels; considering that in doing good to his neighbour he receiveth far *more* good to himself; that he then doth put forth his stock to very great and most certain advantage; that he dischargeth an office very acceptable to God, doth much oblige him, and render him a debtor, doth engage him abundantly to requite and reward that beneficence.

What satisfaction is there in forgiving offences; whereby we discharge our souls from vexatious inmates (black thoughts, and rancorous animosities;) whereby we clear our selves from the troubles attending feuds and strifes; whereby we imitate our most gracious Creatour, and transcribe the pattern of our meek Redeemer; whereby we render our selves capable of divine mercy, and acquire a good title to the pardon of our own sins: according to that divine word, *If you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will forgive you.* Deut. 15. 10
Ecclus. 35. 10
Matt. 11. 25.
25. 35.

How unconfinedly and inexhaustibly vast is that delight, which a charitable complacence in the good of our neighbour (*a rejoycing with those that re-joyce*) may afford? a man thence engrossing all the good in the World, and appropriating to himself all the prosperous successes, all the pleasant entertainments, all the comfortable satisfactions of his neighbour. Even a charitable sympathy, or condolency, in the adversities of our neighbour, is not destitute of content; for the soul is thereby melted into a gentle temper, susceptible of the best impressions; we share in the comfort, which we minister to others; we are refreshed in that kindly submission to the good pleasure of God, in that lightsome contemplation of God's mercy, in those comfortable hopes of a happy issue, which we suggest to the afflicted; We thence are exposed to a grateful sense of God's goodness, in preserving our selves from those calamities, and in qualifying us to comfort our brethren; We feel satisfaction in reflecting upon this very practice, and observing that we do act conformably to good nature, to the dictates of reason, to the will of God, therein discharging a good conscience, and enjoying a portion of that *continual feast*. Rom. 12. 15.
1 Cor. 13. 6.
Rom. 12. 15.
2 Cor. 1. 6.
7. 7.
Συμπαρε-
χλησθῶμεν.
Rom. 1. 12.

I should, if the time would permit, farther declare how we should find delight in the contemplation of all God's Attributes, of his works, of his word; in thankful resentment of all God's benefits; in willing obedience to all God's Laws; how joy is a proper fruit growing on the practice of humility, of justice, of temperance, of devotion, of every virtue and grace; More particularly I should have evidenced how from a patient submission to God's afflicting hand, from penitential contrition of heart for our sins, from a pious fear and solicitude in working out our salvation, most sweet consolations (so tempering those ingredients, as to render their bitterness very savoury) may spring; But in recommending joy I would not produce grief; and therefore shall not farther annoy your patience.

S E R M O N XII.

Keep thy Heart with all diligence, &c.

P R O V. iv. 23.

Keep thy Heart with all diligence, &c.

BEFORE we do apply our selves to inculcate this Precept, it is requisite that we should somewhat explain the terms, and settle the meaning thereof; in doing that, we begin with the last Words, which qualify the action enjoined as to its degree, or extent: *with all diligence*; the words (מְדַר־מִשְׁמֶר) answering to these in the *Hebrew*, do, according to the various use, or force of the particle מְ, admit a threefold acception. They may (1.) denote absolutely the intenseness in degree or extension in kind of the performance required in this Precept: *πάση φυλακῇ τῆς καρδίας*, *Omni custodia serva cor tuum*; keep thy heart with all custody, that is, with all sorts or with all degrees of care and diligence; so the *LXX Interpreters*, and the *Vulgar Latin* following them, render those words. They may (2.) taking the particle for a *Mem excellentiæ*, as they call it, signify comparatively; *præ omni custodia serva cor tuum*; keep thy heart above all keeping; that is, especially and more than thou keepest any other thing; so doth *Pagnin* understand them, not without cause, both for the reason subjoined here, *because from it are the issues of life*; that is, because it is the principal part and fountain of all vital operations, and therefore deserveth the best custody; as also for that in what follows, and in other places of Scripture frequently we are enjoined to keep our tongues from bad discourse, our eyes from wandering after bad objects, our feet from declining to bad courses; and therefore probably in comparison to these, although needful and inferiour custodies, we are admonished to this most especially incumbent custody of our hearts. They may also (3.) and that probably enough be taken so as to denote the universality of the object or matter of this keeping, or the adequate term and bound thereof, keep thy heart, *ἀπὸ παντὸς φυλάγματῶς*, *ab omni re custodienda*, from every thing which it should be kept from; that is, from every thing offensive or hurtful to it: So did *Aquila* and *Theodotion* translate the words. These senses are all of them good, and each may fairly pretend to find place in the meaning of the words; which of them with most likelihood I shall not discuss, meaning only to insist upon the substance of the precept; the nature of which being duly considered, will infer that it is to be observed according to the manner and measure prescribed, understood according to any of those senses, or according to all of them conjoynly.

As for the meaning of the words; *Keep thy heart*; two enquiries may be made: 1. what the heart is, which *Solomon* adviseth us to keep; 2. what to keep it doth import.

To the *first* I answer, that in the stile of Scripture the heart doth commonly import the whole inward man, *ὁ ἐσω ἄνθρωπος*, *the man within us*, (as *St. Paul* speaketh) the *ὁ κρυπτός τῆς καρδίας ἄνθρωπος*, *the hidden man of the heart* (as *St. Peter* calleth it) comprehending all the thoughts and imaginations; all the inclinations and dispositions; all the judgments and opinions; all the passions and affections; all the resolutions and purposes formed within us; in short, all interiour, whether tendencies to move, or actual motions of humane Soul. For the *Scripture* (by the way we may observe it) seemeth to favour that anciently most common and current opinion (embraced by *Aristotle*

tle himself, even as true in strict Philosophy, although rejected by most of the latter Schools) that the heart, that material part and principal entrail of the Body, is the chief seat of the Soul, and immediate instrument of its noblest operations. However, because the heart in a man's breast is most inwardly seated, most secluded from sight, guarded from access, fenced from danger, thence whatever is inmost, most invisible, most inaccessible in any thing is called the heart thereof; and all a man's secret thoughts, inclinations, opinions, affections, designs are involved in this name; sometimes all, or divers of them conjunctly are called his heart, sometimes any one of them singly (as there is subject or occasion of using the word) is so termed: Instances in every kind are innumerable many, and very obvious; and therefore I shall not spend time in producing any, but shall suppose that here the word may be understood in its utmost extent, so as to comprehend all the particulars intimated; there being no apparent reason for preferring, or excluding any; all of them being capable of moral quality, both simply and immediately in themselves, and consequentially as they may be the principles of good or bad actions; and because all of them may be, need to be, ought to be the objects of the keeping here enjoined.

But then what is this *keeping*? I answer, that the Word as applied to this matter is especially capable of three senses, each of which may be exemplified.

1. It may imply to observe, that is, to keep it under a constant view, as it were; to mark, or attend unto, to inquire into and study our heart. So, *My son* (saith the wise Man) *give me thy heart, and let thine eyes keep* (or observe) *my ways*; the same word which here, is there used both in the Hebrew and Greek, and can there well signify no other custody, but that of attending unto; it being the office of the eye only to look, and observe. Likewise, *Observe* (saith God in the Law) *and hear all these words which I command thee*; that is, hear them very attentively: And so in divers other places.

2. It may also denote the governance, or good management of our hearts; keeping all the motions thereof in due order, within fit compass; applying them to good, and restraining them from bad things: So the Psalmist useth the word, when he saith, *I will keep my mouth with a bridle*; that is, I will so rule and curb it, that no evil language shall issue from it: So when the wise Man adviseth to *keep our foot when we go to the house of God*; by keeping it, he means rightly to guide and order our proceedings; or well to dispose our selves when we address our selves to religious performances: So again, *He* (saith he) *that keepeth the Fig-tree, shall eat the fruit thereof*; he that keepeth it, that is, he that dresseth and ordereth it to advantage for bearing fruit.

3. Again, keeping may be taken for preserving, guarding, securing from mischief or damage: which indeed is the most common use of the word; and therefore we need no instancing to countenance it.

Now any of these senses may be intended here, or all of them together; and they indeed are in the nature of the thing so coherent, or so mutually dependent, one on the other, that any one of them can hardly be practised without the rest: For without heedfully observing our heart we cannot well govern it; and an ill-governed heart cannot easily be attended to; and without both watchful observation, and skilful management of it, we cannot guard it from evil; and reciprocally without guarding it, we cannot well rule it, or duly mind it: such a complication there is in practice of these three custodies.

I shall at present only discourse concerning the first of them, which seems in the nature of things, and according to our method of acting to precede. According to this exposition, when 'tis said, *Keep thy heart with all diligence*, we may understand it, as if each of us were thus advised: With a most constant and wary care observe all the interior propensions and motions of thy soul; whatever is done, or designed within thee; whither thy desires lean, what thy affections are stirred by, to what thy judgment of things doth lead thee, with greatest attention and assiduity mark and ponder it.

It is a peculiar excellency of humane nature, which seemeth more to distinguish a man from any inferior rank of creatures, than bare reason it self, that he can reflect upon all that is done within him, can discern the tendencies of his soul, is acquainted with his own purposes; some shadows of other rational

operations are discoverable in beasts, and 'tis not eáſie to convince them, who from plausible experiments do affirm them ſometimes to ſyllogize; but no good reaſon or experience can (I ſuppoſe) make it probable, that they partake of this reflexive faculty; that they do ever regard, or remark upon their own imaginations; they ſeem always to march directly forward with a blind impetuouſneſs toward ſome pleaſing object, without attending to the fancy that guides them, or the appetite which excites them: neither indeed do they ſeem to need any ſuch power in order to the preſervation of their life, or gratifying of their ſenſe, which are the main ends they were deſigned and fitted for. But man being deſigned by his Maker, diſpoſed by the frame of his nature, and obliged by a Law impoſed on him, not to follow caſual impulſes from exteriour objects, nor the bare conduct of his imagination, nor the ſway of his natural propenſities, but to regulate as well the internal workings of his ſoul, as his external actions according to certain Laws or Rules preſcribed him; to ſettle his thoughts upon due objects, to bend his inclinations into a right frame, to conſtrain his affections within due bounds, to rectify his judgments of things, to ground his purpoſes upon honeſt reaſons, and direct them unto lawful matters; it is needful, that he ſhould have this power of diſcerning whatever moveth or paſſeth within him; what he thinks upon, whither he inclines, how he judgeth, whence he is affected, wherefore he doth reſolve; without this power he could not be a moral agent, not able to perform any duty, not properly ſubject to any Law, not liable to render an account of his doings: Did he not perceive his own thoughts, how could he diſpel them, when they are bad, or vain? might he not obſerve his own inclinations, how could he ſtrive to reſtrain them, or to reform them, when they draw to unlawful practices? were he not ſenſible of his affections, how could he endeavour to reduce or compoſe them, when they become exorbitant or tumultuous? were he not conſcious of his own opinions, how could he weigh, and examine them; how could he conform his actions to them, or praſtiſe according to the dictates of his conſcience? 'tis therefore plainly needful that man ſhould be endued with this power, for that without it he can neither perform the duty required of him, nor enjoy the benefits he is capacified, and deſigned for: Our Maker therefore hath conferred it upon us, our duty conſiſts in its right uſe, our advantage ariſeth from the conſtant and careful exerciſe of this excellent faculty: Conſtant and careful, I ſay: *conſtant*, for obſervation implies ſo much; for, if ever we ſhut our eyes, or turn our heads aſide, what we look to may be gone; much therefore will paſs away undiſcerned and unobſerved by us; eſpecially ſuch quick and fleeting things as are the interiour motions of our ſoul will eſcape; wherefore a continual vigilancy is requiſite to a keeper of the heart; It muſt alſo be *careful*, as the keeper of a thing ſo nimble and ſlippery muſt not ſleep, ſo he muſt not ſlumber; he muſt not be oſcitant, but very intent upon his charge; ſuperficial glances upon the outward face, as it were, of the ſoul will not ſuffice; to *obſerve* is with earneſt care to look through the matter; to diſcern whatever lurketh therein, to pierce into the very depth and bottom of it, to ſpy through every nook and corner therein; otherwiſe 'tis but ſlightly viewed rather than truly obſerved; eſpecially ſo ſubtile, ſo intricate, ſo obſcure a thing, as a man's heart is requireth an extraordinary application of mind in obſerving it with judgment and fruit.

This is then our duty, recommended by the Wiſe Man, to be continually with extream diligence, looking inward upon our ſelves, obſerving what thoughts ſpring up within us, what imaginations find moſt welcome harbour in our breſts, what objects moſt affect us with delight, or diſpleaſure (what it is that we love and readily embrace; what we diſtaſt and preſently reject) what prejudices do poſſeſs our minds; wherefore we propoſe to our ſelves ſuch undertakings; converſing with our ſelves, and as it were diſcourſing in this manner: What is it that I think upon, are my thoughts ſerious, reaſonable, and pure? Whither do I propend; are my inclinations compliant to God's Law, and good reaſon? What judgments do I make of things; are my apprehenſions clear, ſolid, ſure, built upon no corrupt prejudice? What doth moſt eaſily ſtir me, and how is my heart moved; are my affections calm, and orderly, and well placed? What plots do I contrive, what projects am I driving on;

on; are my designs good, are my intentions upright and sincere? let me thoroughly enquire into these points, let me be fully satisfied in them; thus should we continually be doing. The holy Scripture doth often bid us to judge our selves, to examine our works; to search and try; to weigh, to heed, to watch over our ways: *If* (saith St. Paul) *we would judge* (discern, or distinguish) *our selves, we should not be judged*; that is, we should avoid those miscarriages, which bring the divine judgments upon us: and, *Let us* (saith the Prophet *Jeremy*) *search and try our ways, and turn unto the Lord*; and, *I said I will take heed to my ways* (saith the *Psalmist*); and, *Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established*, is the *Wise Man's* advice: Search our ways, and ponder our paths, this implies, that we first do examine, and weigh our hearts; for there our ways begin; thence is motion derived to our feet, and to our hands also: All our actions depend as effects of them, all do receive their moral quality thence: Whatever in our doings is good or bad *ἐξ ὧν ἐν* Mark 7. 23. *ἐκπορεύεται*, doth (as our Lord expresth it) issue from within us; our actions are but streams sweet or bitter, clear or foul, according to the tincture they receive at those inward sources of good or evil inclinations, of true or false judgments, of pure or corrupt intention; there consequently we are principally obliged, to exercise the scrutiny and trial required of us.

Socrates is reported to have much admired that Verse in *Homer*,

Ὅτ' ἵ τοι ἐν μεγάροισι καλὸν ἀγασθὲν τέτυκται.

Gell. XIV. 6.

affirming that in it the sum of all Wisdom is comprized: the sense and drift thereof being this, as he took it: Seek and study what good or bad is at home, within thy house; see how all goes in thy breast; employ thy chief inquiry upon the affairs of thy soul; there confining thy curiosity and care.

Such is the duty; and the practice thereof is of huge profit and use; bringing many great benefits and advantages with it; the neglect of it is attended with many grievous inconveniences and mischiefs, and for perswading to the one, dissuading from the other, I shall propound some of them, such as are most obvious, and offer themselves to my meditation.

The most general, and most immediate advantage arising hence is this, that by such a constant and careful inspection, or study upon our hearts, we may arrive to a competent knowledge of, and a true acquaintance with our selves (a most useful knowledge, a most beneficial acquaintance) neither of them being otherwise attainable. *The heart* (as you know the Prophet says) *is deceitful above all things*; and, *who* (adds he) *can know it?* who can know it: none it seems, but God that made it; and the man that hath it: he that hath it, must, I say, be able competently to know it; even in regard to him the question may intimate some difficulty, but it doth not denote an absolute impossibility: Hard it may be for us to know the heart by reason of its deceitfulness; but the slickest imposture, if narrowly looked into, may be detected: 'Tis a very subtle and abstruse, a very various and mutable thing; the multiplicity of objects it doth converse with, the divers alterations it is subject to, from bodily temper, custom, company, example, other unaccountable causes; especially its proneness to comply with, and to suite its judgments of things unto present circumstances without, and present appetites within do render it such; wherefore it is not indeed easie to know it; but yet possible it is; for under severe penalties we are obliged not to be deceived by it; or, which is all one, not to suffer it to be deceived: *Let no man* (saith St. Paul) *deceive himself: See that ye be not deceived*, saith our Saviour: *Take heed* (saith *Moses*) *to your selves, that your heart be not deceived*; such Precepts there are many, obliging us to know our hearts, and to discover the fallacies put on them, or upon us by them; carrying with them directions how to compass it; that is, by looking about us, and taking heed; (by careful circumspection and caution.) It is therefore a feasible thing to avoid being imposed upon, and well to understand our selves: But as other abstruse pieces of knowledge, so this especially cannot be attained without industrious applications of our mind, and constant observations, to find the corners wherein the deceit lurks; we must pursue its secret windings and intrigues; we must trace it step by step, (as Hunters do wild Beasts) into the utmost recesses of its first desires, and most deeply radicated prejudices; we must do as *David* did, when he *Psalm 77. 6, 10.* *strove*

strove to free himself from distrust and impatience in his straits: *I communed with my own heart* (saith he) *and my spirit made diligent search*; by which practice he found, as he farther acquaints us, that it was *his infirmity*, which moved him to doubt of God's mercy and benignity toward him. *Cicero* having

Hac enim una nos cum ceteras res omnes, sum quod est difficultatem docuit, ut nosmet ipsos nosceremus. Cic. de Leg. 1.

somewhere commended Philosophy as the most excellent gift by Heaven bestowed upon man, assigns this reason; *because it teaches us, as all other things, so especially this of all most difficult thing, to know our selves*: but he,

with his favour, doth seem to promise for his friend more than she is able to perform; the main part of this knowledge doth lye beyond the reach of any particular method; the Empirick seems to have more to do here than the Doctor: Philosophy may perhaps afford us some plausible notions concerning the nature of our soul; its state, its power, its manners of acting; it may prescribe some wide directions about proceeding in the discovery of our selves; but the particular knowledge (and therein the chief difficulty lieth) of our selves, how our souls stand inclined and disposed, that only our particular earnest study, and assiduous observation can yield unto us; and it is an inestimable advantage to obtain it. All men are very curious and inquisitive after knowledge, the being endued therewith passeth for a goodly ornament, a rich possession, a matter of great satisfaction, and much use: Men are commonly ashamed of nothing so much as ignorance; but if any knowledge meriteth esteem for its worth and usefulness, this next to that concerning Almighty God, may surely best pretend thereto; if any ignorance deserveth blame, this certainly is most liable thereto; to be studious in contemplating natural effects, and the causes whence they proceed; to be versed in the writings and stories of other mens doings; to be pragmatical observers of what is said or done without us (that which perchance may little concern, little profit us to know) and in the mean while to be strangers at home, to overlook what passeth in our own breasts, to be ignorant of our most near and proper concerns, is a folly, if any, to be derided, or rather greatly to be pitied, as the source of many great inconveniences to us. For it is from ignorance of our selves that we mistake our selves for other Persons than we really are, and accordingly we behave our selves toward our selves with great indecency and injustice; we assume and attribute to our selves that which doth not any-wise belong unto us, or become us: As put case we are ignorant of the Persons we converse with, as to their quality, their merit, their humour; we shall be apt to miscall, and mistake them; to misbehave our selves in our demeanour toward them; to yield them more or less respect than befits them; to cross them rudely, or unhand somely to humour them: In like manner, if we be strangers to our hearts, shall we carry our selves toward our own selves: We shall hence, like men in a frenzy, take our selves for extraordinary People, rich and noble, and mighty, when indeed our condition being duly estimated, we are wretchedly mean and beggarly. We do frequently hug our selves (or rather shadows in our room) admiring our selves for qualities not really being in us; applauding our selves for actions nothing worth; such as proceed from ill principles, and aim at bad ends; when as did we turn our thoughts inwards, and regard what we find in our hearts, by what inclinations we are moved, upon what grounds we proceed, we should be ashamed, and see cause rather to bemoan, than to bless our selves: Descending into our selves we might perchance discern that most of our gallant performances (such as not considering our hearts we presume them to be) are derived from self-love, or pride; from desire of honour, or love of gain; from fear of damage or discredit in the World, rather than out of love, reverence, and gratitude toward God, of charity, compassion, and good-will toward our brethren, of sober regard to our own true welfare and happiness; which are the only commendable principles, and grounds of action: St. *Luke* telleth us of certain men, who *perswaded themselves that they were righteous, and despised others*; upon occasion of whom our Saviour dictateth the Parable of the *Pharisee* and *Publican*; whence, think we, came that fond confidence in themselves, and proud contempt of others? from ig-

Re. 3. 17.

Ut nemo in se tentat descendere, nemo.

Luke 18. 7.

Ποῦ οὖν ἐστὶν ἀπορίαν, ἢ ὁλοῦς εἶναι. τὰ δὲ ἐν ἡμῶν, ὅτι οὐ καὶ κατὰ τὸν νοῦν ποιοῦμεν. ΠΑΖΑΝΖ Οὐστ. 2/1.

norance surely of themselves, or from not observing those bad dispositions, those wrong opinions, those corrupt fountains within, from whence their supposed righteous deeds

did

did flow. *If any man* (saith St. Paul, giving an account of such presumptions) Gal. 6. 3. *thinks himself to be something, when he is nothing*, *ἐαυτὸν φρεναπαλά* *he cheats him- Περὶ ἐαυτὸν* *self in his mind; but let every man examine his work, and then he shall have re- μόνον.* *joycing in himself alone* (or, privately with himself); some, he implieth, do impose upon, and delude themselves, imagining themselves some-bodies, (indued forsooth with admirable qualities, or to have atchieved very worthy deeds) when as, if they would enquire into themselves, they should find no such matter; that themselves were no such Men, and their Works no such Wonders: But if (saith he) a Man doth *δοκιμάζειν* *ἐαυτὸς τὸ ἔργον*, implore and examine what he doeth, and in result thereof doth clearly perceive, that he acteth upon good reasons, and with honest intentions, then may he indeed enjoy a solid interiour satisfaction (a true *καύχημα*, or exultation of mind) whatever others, not acquainted with those inward springs of his motion, do please to judge of him, and his proceedings. No man indeed can truly value himself, or well approve of his own doings, so as to find any perfect comfort in himself, or in them, who doth not by studying himself discover whence, and why he acts: One may be a flatterer, but cannot be a true friend to himself, who doth not thoroughly acquaint himself with his own inward state; who doth not frequently consult, and converse with himself: A friend to himself, I said, and to be so is one of the greatest benefits that humane life can enjoy; that which will most sweeten and solace our life to us: friendship with others (with persons honest and intelligent) is a great accommodation, helping much to allay the troubles, and ease the burthens of life; but friendship with our selves is much more necessary to our well-being: for we have continual opportunities and obligations to converse with our selves; we do ever need assistance, advice and comfort at home: and as commonly 'tis long acquaintance, and familiar entercourse together, which doth conciliate one man to another, begetting mutual dearnefs and confidence, so it is toward ones self: As no man can be a friend to a mere stranger, or to one whose temper, whose humour, whose designs he is ignorant of; so cannot he be a friend to himself, if he be unacquainted with his own disposition and meaning; he cannot in such a case rely upon his own advice, or aid, when need is; but will suspect, and distrust himself; he cannot be pleasant company to himself, but shall be ready to cross, and fall out with himself; he cannot administer consolation to his own griefs and distresses; his privacy will become a desertion, his retirement a mere solitude. But passing over this general advantage, I shall with some more minuteness of distinction consider divers particular advantages accruing from the practice of this duty, together with the opposite inconveniences, which are consequent upon the neglect thereof, in the following Discourse.

— *patria quis exul se quoque fugis?*
Ἄυτὸς σεαυτοῦ χροῖ συμμέλω, καὶ τῷ
δεῖ. Naz. Epist. 60.

**Ἐνιοὶ καὶ ἰδίον βίον ὡς ἀτερπές αὐτὸν*
δέμα προσιδὲν ἔχ' ὑπομνήσιν, ἐδ'
ἀνακλάσαι καὶ λογισμὸν ὡς φῶς ἐφ' ἐαυ-
τὰς καὶ πειραγὰς ἀλλ' ἡ ψυχὴ γέμεται
κακῶν παντοδαπῶν, καὶ οὐκ ἔτι σῶσα, καὶ
οὐδὲ μὴ τὰ ἐνδον, ἀπὸ τῆς δόξης, &c.
Plut. de Curios. p. 916.

S E R M O N XIII.

Keep thy Heart with all diligence, &c.

P R O V. iv. 23.

Keep thy Heart with all diligence, &c.

I Proceed to the particular advantages of the practice of this duty, and the inconveniences of the neglect of it.

I. The constant and careful observation of our hearts will serve to prevent immoderate self-love, and self-conceit; to render us sober and modest

in our opinions concerning, and in our affections toward our selves; qualifying us to comply with the Apostolical Precept, *μὴ φερονεῖν ὑπὲρ ὃ δέει φερονεῖν*; that is, not to overween, or overvalue our selves, and our own things: for he that by serious inspection upon his own heart, shall discern how many fond, impure, and ugly thoughts do swarm within him; how averse his inclinations are from good, and how prone to evil; how much his affections are misplaced, and distempered (while he vehemently delights in the possession, and impotently frets for the want of trifles, having small content in the fruition, and but slender displeasure for the absence of the greatest goods; while empty hopes exalt him, and idle fears deject him; while other various passions, like so many tempests, drive, and toss him all about) who shall observe, how clouds of darkness, error and doubt do hover upon the face of his soul; so that he quickly taketh up opinions, and soon layeth them down, and often turneth from one mistake unto another; how unsettled his resolutions are, especially in the pursuance of the best goods; and what corrupt mixtures cleave to his best purposes; who taketh notice how backward he is unto, and how cold in devotions toward God, how little sensible of his goodness, or fearful of his displeasure, or zealous for his honour, or careful of performing his duty toward him; how little also it is that he desireth, or delighteth in the good; that he pitieth and grieveth at the evil of his neighbour; how sluggish also and remiss he is in the pursuance of his own best affairs, and highest concerns; he that doth, I say, frequently with heedfulness regard these imperfections and obliquities in his own heart, how can he be ravished with self-love? how can he be much taken with himself? can any man dote upon such deformity, admire such weakness and naughtiness? no surely; That men are so amorous of themselves, so haughty and arrogant in their concerns, doth constantly arise from not reflecting on their own hearts; not beholding themselves wisely enough in that mirror; not considering according to just representation there how little lovely, or worthy they are: If they did practise that, they would see reason, and thence become inclinable rather to despise, to loath, to pity themselves.

Leniter ex merito quicquid patiare ferendum est. Ovid. Ep. 5.

2. Upon that advantage is consequent, that this practice will dispose us with equanimity, and patience to bear all crosses and grievances befalling us; so producing not only an excellent virtue, but a considerable solace to us; for the being conscious of so much unworthiness, which observation of our heart will necessarily discover, will not only justify the providence, (so removing all just cause of complaint) but will commend the benignity of God unto us (so administering good matter of thanks.) It will prompt us heartily to confess with those in *Ezra*, that *our punishments are less than our deservings*; to joyn in *Psal.* 103. 10. acknowledgment with the *Psalmist*, that *God hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities*; to say with *Jeremy*, *It is of the Lord's mercy, that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not*; with *Jacob*, *I am less than any of thy mercies*:

Gen. 32. 10.

3. Particularly this Practice will fence us against immoderate displeasure occasionable by Mens hard opinions, or rash censures passed on us: For he that by inquiry into himself perceives so many defects in himself, will not so easily, nor so greatly be offended, if some of them (or some like to them) be objected to him; since he finds himself truly liable to many more, and greater. *Epictetus* his advice is, when you are told, that any Man speaks ill of you, that you should not apologize, but answer only that he was ignorant of many other faults of yours, or he would not only have mentioned those: To be disposed, without dissembling or affection, to follow his counsel, would argue a man very intelligent of himself, and well prepared to endure happily and handsomely encounters of this kind, which every man shall be sure to meet with. None indeed can so contentedly brook reproach, or blame, as he that by intimate acquaintance with his own heart doth know the censure passed on him to be in effect mild and favourable; as finding himself a witness of more faults, than any adversary can accuse him of; as being a stricter examiner, and severer judge of himself, than the most envious eye, or disaffected mind can be. It is also some comfort, that if censures be very outrageous, a Man by knowledge of himself (by knowing his own dispositions, if his person be disfigured by a very ill character; by knowing his own purposes, if his actions be grievously

voulsly asperfed) is certain they are fuch; that he can be as well a faithful witness, and juſt Judge for himſelf, as againſt himſelf.

4. Likewiſe this practice will defend us, as from the diſcomforts of harſh cenſure, ſo from the miſtakes and miſcarriages, to which the more favourable opinions of Men, or their flattering expreſſions (thoſe luſcious poisons) may expoſe us.

— *Nihil eſt quod credere de ſe*

Non poſſit, cum laudatur —

*Index ipſe ſui ſe totum explorat ad unguem
Quid procere, vanique ſerat quid opinto vulgi
Securus* —

'Tis not only true of great men, but even of all men: The common nature of men diſpoſeth them to be credulous, when they are commended, or receive any ſignification of eſteem from others: Every ear is tickled with this *ἡδύον ἄκρομα*, this ſweet muſick of applauſe: But we are not to relye upon others imperfect and ill-grounded judgment ſo much as upon our own more certain knowledge concerning our ſelves:

— *ne cui de te plus quam tibi credas.*

Take no man's word before thine own ſenſe, in what concerns thine own caſe and character, is an advice deſerving our regard and practice: For that a man in queſtions of this kind is able to be a ſkilful and indifferent Umpire between himſelf and others; that he is neither elevated, nor depreſſed in mind by external weights, but keepeth himſelf equally poſed in a juſt conſtitence by his own well-informed conſcience; that neither his heart is exaſperated with the bittereſt gall of reproach, nor his head intoxicated with the ſweeteſt wine of flattery, is an invaluable convenience of life; or rather it is a virtue arguing a moſt ſtrong and healthful conſtitution of ſoul.

How great a levity of mind, how great a vanity is it (ſaith a good Father) ſetting aſide a man's own conſcience to follow other mens opinions (and even that feigned and forged) to be ſnatched away by the wind of falſe praiſe, to rejoyce in being circumvented, and to receive being mocked for a benefit? From being thus abuſed, this practice alone can ſecure us: If we know our ſelves well, we cannot ſo eaſily be deluded by the miſtakes of others concerning us, on either hand.

Qua hac tanta levitas eſt animi. qua tanta vanitas relicta propria conſcientia alienam opinionem ſequi & quidem fictam, atque ſimulatam; rapti venio falſa laudationis. gaudere ad circumventionem nam, & illuſionem pro beneficio accipere? Hier. (vel Paulinus) ad Celant.

5. Likewiſe, farther upon the ſame this practice will conduce to qualifye our opinions, and moderate our paſſions toward others; ſo that without intemperate anger, or bitterneſs, we may bear the faults, errors, and infirmities of our brethren; that we ſhall be benign in our carriage, and gentle in our cenſures even toward them; who do not behave themſelves ſo well and wiſely as they ſhould do. St. Paul thus admoniſheth the *Galatians, Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are ſpiritual* (the more ſpiritual whether in truth, or in our own eſteem, the more eſpecially are we obliged hereto) *reſtore ſuch an one in the ſpirit of meekneſs; conſidering thy ſelf, leſt thou may be alſo tempted:* *σκοπῶν ſεαυτὸν*, looking upon, or ſpying into thy ſelf; ſuch conſidering our ſelves, taking notice of our own infirmity within, perceiving how ſubject we are to the impreſſions of temptation, and that hence it may be our own caſe to fall and fault, if occaſion concur with our weakneſs; diſcerning this, I ſay, as it will be a reaſon obliging, ſo it may be an inſtrument conducing to a mitigation of ſpirit toward thoſe, whom we ſee overtaken with miſtake, or

Gal. 6. 1.

overborn by frailty. *Why doſt thou ſee a mote in thy brothers eye, but doſt not conſider the beam in thine own eye?* is our Saviour's queſtion; why a man ſhould do ſo, there cannot (as he implies) any good reaſon be aſſigned; ('tis a very unreaſonable and inexcusable miſcarriage) but whence a man doeth ſo, is obvious and plain; it is, becauſe he curiouſly pryeth into other mens doings, and careleſſly neglecteth the obſervation of his own heart: Did we reflect our ſight inwards, we ſhould be more apt to mark our own faults, and leſs ready to diſcover thoſe of others; or however we ſhould be more gently affected in regard to them: For he that knows himſelf a beggarly Wretch, will he reproach poverty to another? He that conſulting the glaſs doth find himſelf ill-favoured, will he upbraid another for want of grace or beauty? He that perceives that the dart will rebound, and thereby wound himſelf, will he not be careful of flinging it? Will a man be forward in pronouncing a heavy ſentence againſt another, who conſiders himſelf by plain conſequence involved in the

Marc. Ant. XL.

18.

Matt. 7. 21

Rom. 2. 1.

condemnation thereof? Should a man do so, he doth at least render himself incapable of apology, or excuse: So we are told by St. Paul: *Every censurer* (πᾶς ὁ κενύων) *is, saith he, inexcusable; for that in arraigning another he condemns himself:* guilty is he of inexcusable folly, or impudence; of folly and blindness, if he see not; of extream impudence, if seeing his own obnoxiousness he will not abstain from judging others for that, of which himself is guilty in the same kind, or equivalently in some other. You know how David was caught by Nathan, and unwarily adjudged himself to death: And so may every man expose himself, that is rigorous in censure toward others without reflecting on himself, and considering his own heart; wherein he shall find so much ground and matter of being angry with, and judging himself. If we

Si volumus aequi rerum omnium iudices
esse, hoc primum nobis suadeamus, neminem
esse nostrum sine culpa. Sen. de Ir.
Συγγνώμην ἔχει δίδοναι πᾶσι τοῖς
ἀμαρτάνουσιν, πλὴν ἑαυτοῖς. Cato Maj.
Plut. p. 624.

will be fierce and keen, 'tis reason we should be so first, and chiefly there, where our greatest enemies do abide; whence most mischief ariseth to us; where there is fittest matter, and justest cause of passion: Thus is this practice a most proper and effectual remedy for those baneful vices of

pride and peevishness in our selves, of malignity and fury toward others. But farther,

6. The observation of our heart yieldeth great advantage in being very conducive to render men truly wise and prudent; in those things especially, which most nearly concern them: Giving them to see before them, and to understand what they do; and to proceed without security; as contrarily the neglect thereof rendreth men unadvised and uncertain in their doings. A main point of prudence consisteth in suiting a man's undertakings to his powers and capacities; in not attempting things surpassing his ability; or fitness; and in not declining such useful, or beneficial attempts, as he may well compass. Some are overbold and rash in setting upon things beyond their strength to accomplish, or skill to manage; whence commonly with shame and sorrow they are defeated in their enterprizes; Others are overbackward and diffident, so as not to adventure upon what they may with good advantage, or perhaps ought to perform; thence depriving themselves of the benefits they might obtain, or omitting the duties, which they are obliged to; both which inconveniences usually do proceed from the not looking into, and studying the heart; for the most and greatest impediments of action do lye there; being grounded upon inward indispositions, or disagreeableness of mens temper, capacity, inclination to the matters, to which they apply themselves: A tender foot will be galled and lamed, if you set it going in rugged paths; a weak head will turn, if you place it high, or upon the brink of a precipice; a soft spirit cannot well comport with boisterous employment; he that naturally affects calm and quiet, must not hope to come off well, if he engage himself upon affairs exposed to abundance of care and tumult; nor will he if he be well studied this way, and rightly understand himself, adventure thereupon. It was as well ac-

Psal. 113. 1.

cording to wisdom, as modesty, that David could say: *My heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty, neither do I exercise my self in great matters, or in things too high for me.* In every undertaking two things occur to be considered, what of difficulty is found therein, and what of temptation; whether it can be done, and whether it should be done: It is a folly to spend our care and pains upon that, which is too hard for us to effect, and 'tis worse than so to adventure upon that, which most probably will bring us into sin, and hurt our souls; only the study of our selves, weighing our power, and trying our temper, will prevent both: He that doeth this may commonly foresee what, the case being put, he shall do; that if such a temptation doth assault him in such circumstances, his inclinations will be apt to comply therewith, and he shall scarce be able to resist; (that, for instance, he shall wax haughty in a state of dignity, become luxurious in abundance of wealth, be distracted with care in a busie employment) and therefore he will not be so forward to ingage himself upon such occasions; danger and mischief being so vividly pre-represented to his sight. But he that pondereth not his own heart is ready to presume, that be the business what it will, he shall come off well; and so unadvisedly rusheth into the snare; he assumes unweildy burthens upon his shoulders, which he soon feeleth sorely to oppress and pain him; which he can neither bear with ease,

ease, nor put off with convenience; When, for instance, the Prophet told *Hazaël* what Cruelties and Rapines, should (when he got power and opportunity) be committed by him; you see how he was startled at the report: *am I a Dog*, saith he; that is, can I be so vile and base; Yes, he might himself have perceived that he should in likelihood be so; the probability of his doing as the Prophet said, had been no great news to him, if he had observed his own inclinations. Good *Agur* on the other side did better understand himself, when he prayed; *Give me neither poverty nor riches, but feed me with food convenient for me*; he was conscious of natural infirmity; and therefore afraid of being in a condition that might prevail upon it; of great wealth, lest it should tempt him to forgetfulness, and neglect of God (*lest*, (saith he) *I be full and deny thee, and say who is the Lord?*) of extream want, lest it should put him upon unjust, dishonest and impious courses to maintain his life; (*lest*, adds he, *I be poor and steal, and take the name of my God in vain*;) he saw, by looking into himself, that self-love (the root of pride and injustice) was potent in him, and formidable, when occasion should favour it, and therefore by imploring divine aid, he strove to decline the advantages and occasions of it. It was good counsel with *Xenophon* tells us the Oracle gave *Cræsus*, consulting about the success of his attempt against *Cyrus*, *Σαυτεν γινώσκων διδάμων Κερίδε παρήσεις*. *Knowing thy self thou shalt pass on happily* (in the course of thy life and undertakings:) had he, considering his own ability, in relation to the dubious event of things (that as he could not promise himself good fortune, so he did not know how he should comport with bad; being not sure that he should overcome either his enemies, or himself) thus, I say, had he complied with the Oracle's advice, he might have escaped the loss and sorrow which befell him. So is it with us; if we know not the burthen of our Vessel, we shall either put more fail to it than it can bear, or less than will suffice to carry it on, it will be overladen, or want fit balast: If we are ignorant of our capacities, we shall either soar too high with a dangerous confidence, or grovel below in a sluggish listlessness. Studying our selves will help to preserve us in a middle pitch, will direct us in a moderate course, wherein we may proceed with sufficient courage and alacrity; with a prudent foresight, or at least with a comfortable hope of good success.

7. Near to that lies another considerable benefit, attending this practice, which is, that it will help to render us expedite in our resolutions, and constant to them; consistent with our selves, and uniform in our proceedings; whence will arise both great convenience to our selves, and satisfaction to others with whom we deal or converse: As on the contrary side, from the neglect thereof we shall become slow in deliberation, doubtful in resolution, and unstable in performance. When any occasion of acting is presented, we shall be ready to close with what is agreeable to our inclination, and not repugnant to our judgment, if by due study and experience we are acquainted with them; that acquaintance is a certain preparation to a speedy choice; and we shall upon the same grounds constantly adhere to our choice, standing upon so firm a base; and so shall neither discompose our selves, nor disappoint others by our irresolution and inconstancy. But he that skills not his own heart, first will dwell long upon consultation (not feeling perfectly whither his inward Bias doth draw him) and when he seems upon some superficial reason to have determined on one side, some discordance to his own inclination, or some latent prejudice soon discovering it self, he wavers, and at length falls off; finding that he hath promised to himself or others what he is unable or unwilling to perform; so like St. *James* his two-souled man, he is unsteady in all his ways. The hard Student of himself is like a man that hath his Estate in *numérato*, in ready Cash, all in his hand, or at his command; he can presently tell what he can do, and satisfy those he hath to do with; go to him, you may know where to have him, even just where you left him, or where he uses to be; you may expect a sudden dispatch, and you may rely upon his word; for he knows before-hand what he doeth, and shall continue to like; why he determines so or so; and cannot be removed from his well-grounded purpose, (that which is by the Philosopher termed *ratio nec dissidens, nec hæsitans*, a reason that doth not strive, nor flick, he is master of.) But he that neglects this

this practice, what he hath any title to, lieth disperfed, and laid up in corners unknown to himself, fo that himself cannot come readily by it; you can hardly tell where to find him; you must wait his resolution, and when 'tis told you, you cannot be assured thereof; nor any-wise satisfied that he will stick to his word, or his mind; he knows not thoroughly what he would have himself, can you then hope for a certain answer from him? He cannot well trust himself, can you then relie upon him? He will find himself mistaken and crossed in his own choice, can you expect less? *Quid est sapientia? semper idem velle, atque idem nolle*: Constancy to a Man's self is, saith he, the very being of Wisdom; however nothing more befits a Man, more commends him to society, and suits him to business, is more pleasant and grateful to those who have to do with him, than such a clear, uniform, steady disposition of mind; such a smooth and even tenour of action; nothing renders conversation and commerce more unpleasant, than a fickle lubricity of humour, and unaccountable deformity of behaviour: That study therefore is very useful, which conduceth to breed and maintain the one, and which removeth the other.

Sen. Ep. 20.

Ecclef. 7. 14.

3 John 1. 2.

8. Again, another valuable convenience of this practice is, that it disposeth unto, and preserveth a Man's mind in a sober temper, agreeable to his state, and to the circumstances into which he is cast; such a temper I mean as that, which the *Wise Man* prescribes, where he saith, *In the day of prosperity be joyful, but in the day of adversity consider*. It is apt to beget either a comfortable joy, or a wholesome regret, according as the interior condition of his soul (that wherein the chief cause of the one or of the other affection, is grounded) doth seasonably and justly require. To be transported with mirth and jollity in a state of grievous misery, when reason it self demands sorrow and pity; to be sad and dumpish when all things flow prosperously, either of those will seem marvellously incongruous, and argue a kind of stupidity in him that so behaves himself. Now there is not in truth any calamity so disastrous as that which befalls us within our selves, no Prosperity so worthily delightful as the good proceeding of affairs in our souls: 'Tis the most excellent pleasure a Man is capable of, that which doth spring from the being conscious, that his mind doth *flourish* (as St. *John* speaks) that is, go well forward in a happy course; that good thoughts freely do spring up, that good inclinations are strong and prevalent, that good habits of mind wax vigorous; that the love of goodness is improved; that he generally doth thrive in health and strength spiritual: No increase of treasure can affect the covetous, no rising in power and dignity can satisfy the ambitious, no enjoyment of sensual entertainments can ravish the voluptuous man with so true or great content, as the sensible proficiency in virtuous and pious dispositions of soul, growing *richer unto God*, and stronger in the hopes of his favour do produce in him that doth affect it, and can perceive it: 'Tis a joy in all respects incomparable; only wise and reasonable, pure and innocent, firm and durable. As on the other hand if it be so that we discern, that within our hearts bad thoughts do swarm and multiply, bad appetites do sway, bad customs do encroach upon us; that desire of, and delight in good things decay; that we become more dark, dull, unsettled in our spiritual apprehensions, more feeble and languid in our prosecutions of virtue, 'tis a great benefit to have a timely remorse prompting and urging us to endeavour a deliverance from so unhappy a condition: But no man can well either enjoy that comfortable delight, or be affected with this profitable sorrow, who doth not with a careful attention view his heart, and descry how things go there. This consideration mindeth of a farther and more general advantage accruing from this practice; which is this, that

Matt. 15. 18.

9. A serious inspection into our hearts doth much avail toward the reformation of our hearts and lives; curing the distempers, and correcting the vices of them. For to the curing any disease it is requisite to know the complexion and temper of the Patient, and the part affected, and the next causes thereof: As the most grievous of bodily diseases are seated in, or do proceed from the entrails; but not all of them from the same one of them; and the same disease depends upon the distemper sometimes of one, sometimes of another among them: So do all vices (as our *Saviour* expressly teacheth) issue from the heart, or interior man; some from one, some from another

another part or region thereof; and the same from different parts: Sometimes natural temper, sometimes false opinion, sometimes evil custom is the root of the same kind of disease; and 'tis expedient we should know distinctly which of them in particular cases is the root, that accordingly we may understand what method of cure to use, whence to fetch the remedy, where to apply it; for unskilfulness in these points may frustrate our endeavours of amendment. If the mischief proceed from natural inclination, we must not hope ever utterly to subdue it, nor to free our selves suddenly from the incursions thereof; nor is bare reasoning a proper Weapon against it; it being grounded in the original constitution of the soul, either immediately, or as linked to the body; which by no operation of our mind can be soon altered; for, *No wisdom* (as *Seneca* speaketh well) *can remove the natural vices of body or mind; what is infixed and inbred may be allayed by art, not subdued.*

Nulla sapientia naturalia corporis, aut animi vitia ponuntur: quicquid infixum & ingenitum est leniter arte, non vincitur.
Sen. Ep. 11.

Reason alone and directly, is not able to grapple therewith; she'll break her teeth upon so tough and knotty matter: It will weary her arms in vain to swim against the rapid current of natural propension; the violent eruptions thereof may indeed somewhat be restrained; occasions of complying therewith may often be declined; it may in time, and by degrees, be weakned by subtracting the food and incentives thereof: But especially Devils of this kind must, as our Saviour instructeth us, be ejected by humble, earnest and frequent invocation of divine assistance; without which other means commonly will prove ineffectual: But if the vice proceed only from ill habit, or the prevalency of bad custom, we are to oppose a contrary custom thereto, presently disusing that practice, and acting otherwise, so shall we easily remove and extirpate it: If neither of these causes are discernable, we may presume our indisposition is derived from ill opinion; and that consequently our best course of redressing it, is to examine the reason of the thing; to get clear and right apprehensions concerning it. For example, if we observe our selves apt to be frequently transported with anger, let us look into our hearts, and take notice, whether the root of that distemper be a cholerick complexion, or whether it arise from an habitual indulgence to our selves of being moved upon slight causes, whereby a peevish humour is grown upon us; or whether it cometh from vain conceits of our selves, as of Persons unto whom extraordinary deference and observance is due, so that no man should presume to dissent from our opinion, or contravene our desire; and as we find, so we must respectively proceed in repressing the causes of this disease; praying, if it arise from nature, to the Omnipotent (the only Lord and Commander of nature) that he would by his grace free us from that inflamable temper, and enable us to govern our passion; withal shunning occasions of being provoked; abstaining from such diet, such business, such company, as naturally do kindle or ferment that humour: If the Malady grow from custom, using our selves to bear patiently harsh words, unkind dealings, cross accidents; if our opinion dispose us thereto, reasoning our selves into moderate conceits about our selves, considering the reasons that may acquit or excuse others to us upon occasion of offence: Using all, or some of these means, or the like, such as the observation of our heart shall discover to us to be most proper and suitable to the nature, or to the cause of this distemper infesting us, we shall wholly, or in good part rid our selves from it. Again, (to adjoin another example, the matter seeming to deserve our heed) suppose we experience our selves inclining to covetousness; eager in getting, solicitous in keeping, unwilling to part with our goods upon reasonable occasion (for the maintenance of our convenient respect in the World, or for relieving the needs of our Brethren, or for serving the publick, or for promoting the interests of Piety and Virtue) let us then look, and see whether this ariseth from a natural straitness, hardness, suspiciousness, or diffidence of Heart (some such dispositions may be observed in men) or from being by our Education, or manner of life enured to such a love of getting, or of sparing, or of tenacity; or whether it springs from conceits about the worth, or the necessity of wealth (that without being furnished with heaps of treasure, we shall come into danger of want or disgrace; we shall not be able to maintain our life, or uphold our credit; we shall not

enjoy

*Τὸ οὐδέποτε τὸ
ἐξ ὧν ἐκείνη
τις ἐξ ὧν
ἐπίστα.*

enjoy any thing, or be any bodies among men) let us, I say, by examining our hearts find out from which of these springs this fordid disposition floweth, and accordingly strive to correct it; either praying to Almighty God, that he would enlarge and supple our heart, if it be natural to us; or addicting our selves upon reasonable occasion to liberality and free expence, if custom hath therein prevailed upon us; or, if vain surmises have seduced us, rectifying our judgments; as by other good discourses, proper against that brutish vice, so especially by considering that God is most good and bountiful, and tender of our being overwhelmed with need; that he continually watcheth over us, so that he cannot but see, and will regard what we want; and that he faithfully hath promised, if we endeavour to please him, and use a moderate diligence in honest ways to maintain our selves, that he will yield his blessing, and never will leave us destitute. So in all cases we may proceed discreetly in the cure of our spiritual, and in withstanding the temptations to sin, that assault us, if we do but search into our hearts, and learn thence, whence they flow, and by what they are nourished.

10. This practice farther, doth particularly serve to regulate our devotions, and performances more immediately spiritual; by shewing us what we need to pray for, what we are obliged to give thanks for, what it becomes us to confess, and deprecate, for want thereof we shall be apt not only to neglect, but indecently to confound, yea miserable to pervert these duties; to confound them by praying for what is already given us, is put into our hand, or lies within our reach; for which therefore we are not to pray, but to render thanks; also by giving thanks formally for that, which perhaps we are far from possessing, and do most want; so, I say, we shall be apt to confound and misplace, to render vain and chimerical in a sort our spiritual addresses, as wanting due ground and object; yea to pervert them by asking for things really prejudicial and hurtful to us (in the circumstances we stand) and thanking God for what in anger and judgment he dispenseth to us (so indeed are many appearing goods, grateful to present sense) as also deprecating things most beneficial and useful, and healthful to our souls; neglecting to return thanks for what God disposeth in mercy (so are many things at present bitter, and unfavoury to our carnal appetite and fancy) thus from ignorance of our selves, and what we truly need, are we apt to pervert our devotions, not only defeating our selves of the advantages they might yield us; but (if God be not more gracious than to hearken to us, and to grant our wishes) bringing lamentable mischief on our selves. Many examples of these confusions and perverse misapplications of devotion both Scripture affords, and experience will suggest, if we observe them. You know the comparison in the Gospel between the devotions of the *Pharisee* and the *Publican*, with the different acceptance they found: The one was prompt enough to give thanks for the graces he had received, and the advantages he conceived that he had in his qualities, and in his performances above others; but not having duly studied himself; did not perceive, that he was rather bound to ask pardon for the pride of his heart, and the vanity that adhered to his performances, which rendered his thanksgiving very improper and unseasonable: The other being conscious of his demerits and wants, with a manner suitable to his condition, in words few, but full and fit, did confess his unworthiness (which to do did best beseem him) and implored mercy (which was the thing he chiefly needed) so was his discreet Prayer better accepted, than the others impertinent thanksgiving: *I tell you* (saith our Saviour) *this man went down to his house justified rather than the other.* The two Sons of *Zebedee*, conceiting that our Lord would shortly become a great Prince, and affecting to become Favourites then, did confidently sue for the next place of dignity about him; our Lord repressed their fond ambition by downright telling them first that *they knew not what they asked*; then by demanding of them whether they were able to undergo the trials they should meet with; implying what they should rather have requested; that they more needed humility and patience, than pomp and pleasure: And it was the same two persons, whose intemperate zeal he elsewhere checked with an *ἐκ τῆς οὐκ ἐπιστάμενης πνεύματος*, *Ye know not of what spirit ye are:* And no wonder; if they who knew not what they were, did ask they knew not what; that being ignorant

Psal. 73. 18.

Heb. 12. 11.

*Evertere domos
totas optantibus
ipsis
Dii faciles, &c.
Juv. Sat. 10.*

Luke 18.

Luke 18. 14.

Matt. 20. 21.

Luke 9. 55.

ignorant of their own hearts, they should endite absurd petitions; that in such a case they should desire things not only incongruous and inconvenient, but dangerous and destructive to themselves. For to make a right distinction of these duties; to be able discreetly and pertinently (if I may so speak) to converse with God, it is requisite to look into our hearts; and from them to take fit matter, due measure, right season of request, and of acknowledgment respectively; things commonly not being as they appear to our present sense, or to our gross conceit, in themselves, or in their degree good or bad; but according to the disposition of our hearts, and the effects they work upon them: That is not good, which pleaseth our sense and fancy, nor that bad, which disgusts them; but that is good, which rendereth our heart wiser and better; which correcteth our inclinations, composeth our affections, informeth our judgments rightly, and purifieth our intentions; that is bad, which hath contrary effects within us. We it's likely should pray with greatest seriousness and earnestness for the removal of those infirmities, for ease from those afflictions, which we see the Holy *Apostles* (being better instructed in things, being more acquainted with themselves), did rejoyce, did glory in, did give thanks for; as finding the wholesome operations they had upon their hearts (that by them their virtues were exercised, and improved, their faith tried, their patience increased, their hope confirmed; that, (to use the *Apostles* Words) they did *in the sequel return the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who were exercised by them*; but leaving this Point, though deserving perhaps farther consideration, I proceed, and say farther, that

Jam. 1. 2.
Rom. 5. 3.
2 Cor. 12. 9.
Gal. 6. 14.
1 Pet. 1. 6.
Heb. 12. 11.

11. The continual visitation of our inward parts doth not only yield much advantage, (as in some measure hath been shewed) at the long-run by influence at the spring-head upon the principles and causes of action, but doth immediately conduce to good practice, preventing and stifling in the very birth many sinful and vain practices: That so many indiscreet and impertinent, so many irregular and unsavory, so many unjust and uncharitable speeches do issue from our mouths, it is especially because we are not then employed upon this duty; are not watching over our hearts, and observing those inward fountains (levity and wantonness of thought, precipitancy and disorder of passion) from whence they overflow; were we intent there, we should perhaps endeavour to stop the current, and contain these inward bad motions from venting themselves. The like we may say concerning many unwarrantable actions, into which we inconsiderately plunge our selves, not heeding whence they spring: Did we regard that such actions were arising from ambitious, covetous, froward dispositions; or from certain ill-grounded prejudices lurking in our minds, we should often surely forbear them; but while we keep none, or bad sentinels; while in the custody of our hearts we sleep, or are drowsie; while we neglect to examine and weigh our actions what they are, and whence they come, they (although very bad and hurtful) do steal by us, and pass as friends, and we hear no more of them, but in their woful consequences. What efficacy the consideration of God's omnipresent eye, beholding all our doings, hath, and how all wise men do press it as a powerful means to contain us from bad action, you cannot but well know; as likewise that some of them in order to the same purpose direct us to conceive our selves always under the inspection of some person especially venerable for his worth, or for his relation to us, whom we should be afraid, or ashamed to displease: And surely were the faith concerning God's presence, or the fancy concerning the presence of a *Cato*, or a *Laelius* strong enough, they could not but have great effect: However did we but live even in our own presence, under the eye of our own judgment and conscience; regarding not only the matter and body, but the reason and ground (that is the soul) of our actings; even that would do much; the love and reverence of our selves would somewhat check and controll us; we should fear to offend, we should be ashamed to villify even our selves by fond or foul proceedings: It would (in the Philosophers esteem) supply the room of any other Keeper or Monitor, if we could thus keep our selves: *If (saith he) we have so far profited, as to have got a reverence of our selves, we may then well let go a Tutor, or Pedagogue.*

Sen. Ep. 11.

25.

Sen. Ep. 25.

Cum jam profeceris tantum, ut sit tibi etiam tui reverentia, licebit dimittas pedagogum. Ibid.

12. This practice doth much conduce to the knowledge of humane nature, and the general dispositions of mankind, which is an excellent and most useful part of Wisdom: For the principal inclinations and first motions of the soul are alike in all men; whence he that by diligent study of himself hath observed them in his own soul, may thence collect them to be in others; he hath at least a great advantage of easily tracing them, of soon descrying them, of clearly perceiving them in those he converseth with; the which knowledge is of great use, as directing us how to accommodate our selves in our behaviour and dealing with others.

• No Man indeed can be a good Instructor or Adviser in Moral Affairs, who hath not attained this Skill, and doth not well understand the nature of Man: His Precepts and Rules will certainly be fallacious, or misapplied without it: This is that, which rendered the Dictates of the *Stoicks* and other such Philosophers so extravagant and unpracticable, because they framed them not according to the real nature of Man, such as is existent in the World, but according to an Idea formed in their own Imaginations.

Some Caution indeed is in this matter to be used, that those motions of Soul, which proceed from particular Temper and Complexion, from supervenient Principles or Habits, may be distinguished from those which are natural and common unto all: Which distinction to make is of great use and benefit, in order to the governing, restraining or correcting them.

If there be any in us, which are not observable in any other men; or in other men, which are not in us, those do not arise from common nature, but from the particular disposition of one or other respectively.

13. I add lastly, that universally this Practice is requisite and necessary for the well governing of our Heart. Politicians inculcate much, that to the well governing of a People, squaring fit Laws for it, and keeping it in good order, the nature and humour of that People should be chiefly heeded and well understood, for that the grave *Romans*, and light *Greeks*; the soft *Persians*, and stout *Germans*; the subtle *Africans*; and gross *Scythians* would not be well managed in the same manner. So to govern any man's heart (since the hearts of men, as their faces, and as their voices, differ according to diversities of complexion, of age, of education, of custom and manner of living) it conduceth to know how it is disposed from any of those, or the like causes. (But how we are to guide and govern our hearts, and what particular influence this practice hath thereupon, I reserve for other Meditations; when we shall endeavour more distinctly to shew how we may apply our thoughts to due objects; how curb and correct our inclinations; how order our passions; how rectify our opinions; how purify our intentions; now) I conclude with the good

*Vid. Naz.
Oyat. 1.*

Psal. 86. 11. Psalmist's Requests to God Almighty: Teach us thy way O Lord, unite our hearts to fear thy name. Give us understanding, and we shall keep thy Law, yea we shall observe it with our whole heart. Search us O God, and know our hearts; try us, and know our thoughts; see if there be any wicked way in us, and lead us in the way everlasting. Amen.

S E R M O N XIV.

The Consideration of our Latter End.

P S A L. xc. 12.

So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.

THIS *Psalms* is upon several peculiar accounts very remarkable; for its antiquity, in which it perhaps doth not yield to any parcel of Scripture; for the eminency of its Author, *Moses* the Man of God; the greatest of the ancient Prophets (most in favour, and (as it were) most intimate with God;) 'Tis also remarkable for the form and matter thereof, both affording much useful instruction. In it we have a great Prince, the Governour of a numerous People, sequestering his mind from the management of publick Affairs to private Meditations; from beholding the present outward appearances, to considering the real nature and secret causes of things: In the midst of all the splendour and pomp, of all the stir and tumult about him, he observes the frailty of humane condition, he discerns the Providence of God justly ordering all; this he does not only in way of wise consideration, but of serious devotion, moulding his observations into pious acknowledgments, and earnest prayers to God; thus while he casts one eye upon Earth viewing the occurrences there, lifting up the other to Heaven; there seeing God's all-governing Hand, thence seeking his gracious favour and mercy. Thus doth here that great and good Man teach us all, (more particularly Men of high Estate, and much Business) to find opportunities of withdrawing their thoughts from those things, which commonly amuse them, (the Cares, the Glories, the Pleasures of this World) and fixing them upon matters more improveable to devotion; the transitoriness of their Condition, and their subjection to God's just Providence; joyning also to these Meditations suitable acts of Religion, due acknowledgments to God and humble prayers. This was his practice among the greatest encumbrances that any man could have; and it should also be ours. Of those his devotions, addressed to God, the Words are part, which I have chosen for the subject of my meditation and present discourse; concerning the meaning of which I shall first touch somewhat; then propound that observable in them, which I design to insist upon.

The Prophet *David* hath in the 39th *Psalms* a Prayer very near in words, and of kin (it seems) in sense to this here; *Lord, pray he, Make me to know my end, and the measure of my days, what it is, that I may know how frail I am:* Concerning the drift of which place, as well as of this here, it were obvious to conceive, that both these Prophets do request of God, that he would discover to them the definite term of their life (which by his decree he had fixed, or however by his universal prescience he did discern; concerning which we have these words in *Job*, *Seeing man's days are determined, the number of his months are with thee, thou hast appointed his bounds, that he cannot pass*) we might, I say, at first hearing be apt to imagine, that their Prayer unto God is, (for the comfort of their mind burthened with afflictions, or for their better direction in the management of their remaining time of life) that God would reveal unto them the determinate length of their life. But this sense, which the Words seem so naturally to hold forth, is by many of the Fathers rejected; for that the knowledge of our lives determinate measure is not a fit matter of Prayer to God; that being a secret reserved by God to himself, which to inquire into favours of presumptuous curiosity; the universal validity

of which reason I will not debate; but shall defer so much to their judgment, as to suppose that the numbring of our days (according to their sense) doth here only imply a confused indefinite computation of our days number, or the length of our life; such as, upon which it may appear, that necessarily our life cannot be long (not according to the account mentioned in this *Psalm*) the same with that of *Solon*, in *Herodotus* (above 70 or 80 Years, especially as to purposes of health, strength, content) will probably by reason of various accidents, to which it is exposed, be much shorter (7 or 10 Years according to a moderate esteem) may possibly, from surprises undiscoverable, be very near to its period; by few instants removed from death (a Year, a Month, a Day, it may be somewhat less.) This I shall allow to be the *Arithmetick* that *Moses* here desires to learn; whence it doth follow that teaching (or making

Οὐ γὰρ ἐπιστῆναι ἔχοντες ἀνθρώποις ἀγνοεῖν ὅτι ἀνθρώπων ζωὴν ἔστι θνητὴν ἔσθ' ὅτι γέγονεν εἰς τὸ σπένδειν. Plut. ad Apoll. p. 202.

Quis est tam stultus, quamvis sit adulescens, cui sit exploratum se vel ad vesperum esse victurum. Cic. de Sen.

to know, so it is in the *Hebrew*) doth import here (as it doth elsewhere frequently in Scripture) God's affording the Grace to know practically, or with serious regard to consider this state and measure of our life (for in speculation no Man can be ignorant of humane lives brevity and uncertainty; but most Men are so negligent and stupid, as not to regard it sufficiently, not to employ this knowledge to any good purpose). This Interpretation I chuse, being in it self plausible enough, and countenanced by so good authority; yet the former might well enough (by good consequence, if not so immediately) serve my design: or be a ground able to support the discourse I intend to build upon the Words; the subject whereof briefly will be this, That the consideration of our lives certain and necessary brevity and frailty, is a mean proper and apt to dispose us toward the wise conduct of our remaining life; to which purpose such a consideration seems alike available, as the knowledge of its punctual or definite measure; or more than it; upon the same, or greater reasons.

As for the latter clause, *that we may apply our hearts to wisdom*; 'tis according to the *Hebrew*, *and we shall bring the heart to wisdom*; implying, the application of our hearts to wisdom to be consequent upon the skill and practice (bestowed by God) of thus computing our days. As for *wisdom*, that may denote either *sapience*, a habit of knowing what is true; or *prudence*, a disposition of chusing what is good; we may here understand both, especially the latter; for, as *Tully* saith of *Philosophy*, *Omnis summa Philosophiæ ad beatè vivendum refertur*, The sum or whole of *Philosophy* refers to living happily; so all Divine Wisdom doth respect good practice. The word also comprehends all the consequences and adjuncts of such wisdom (for so commonly

De fin. II. p. 95.

Natura dedit usuram vitæ, tanquam pecunie, nulla præstitura die. Tuse. quest. I. p. 326.

such words are wont by way of *metonymie* to denote, together with the things primarily signified, all that naturally flow from, or that usually are conjoyned with them) in brief (to cease from more explaining that, which is in it self conspicuous enough) I so understand the Text, as if the Prophet had thus expressed himself: Since, O Lord, all things are in thy hand, and sovereign disposal; since it appears that man's life is so short and frail, so vexatious and miserable; so exposed to the just effects of thy displeasure; we humbly beseech thee, so to instruct us by thy wisdom, so to dispose us by thy grace; that we may effectually know, that we may seriously consider the brevity and uncertainty of our lives durance; whence we may be induced to understand, regard, and chuse those things which good reason dictates best for us; which according to true wisdom, it most concerns us to know and perform. From which sense of the words we might infer many useful documents, and draw matter of much wholesome discourse; but passing over all the rest, I shall only insist upon that one point, which I before intimated, *viz.* that the serious consideration of the shortness and frailty of our life is a proper instrument conducive to the bringing our hearts to wisdom, to the making us to discern, attend unto, embrace and prosecute such things as are truly best for us; that it is available to the prudent conduct and management of our life; the truth of which proposition is grounded upon the divine Prophet his opinion: He apprehended such a knowledge or consideration to be a profitable means of inducing his heart to wisdom; wherefore he prays God to grant it him in order

I. The serious consideration of our lives frailty and shortness will confer to our right valuation (or esteem) of things, and consequently to our well placing, and our duly mode-

opinion concerning them, we do more or less loath and shun. Our actions therefore being all thus directed and grounded, to esteem things aright both in kind and degree (ἐκτάσθαι ἀποδιδόναι τιμὴν ἀξίαν, to assign every thing its due price, as *Epicetus* speaks; *quanti quidque sit judicare*, to judge what each thing is worth, as *Seneca*,) is in order the

Primum est, ut quanti dices; secundum, ut impetibus ordinatum temperatumque inter impetum tuum. actiones ut in omnibus istis tibi ipse
Epist. 89.

because these are more reasonable, more certain, more grateful to our senses than these (it is plainly otherwise) but because these are brittle and fading, those solid and permanent; these we cannot hope to retain the use or pleasure of long; those we may promise our selves to enjoy so long as we please; whence on the other side is it, that we little fear or shun any thing how painful, how offensive soever, being assured of its soon passing over, the biting of a flea, or the prick in letting blood? The reason is evident; and that in gene-

them. In general, and in the lump concerning them all St. Paul tells us, that τὸ χῆμα τὸ κόσμος παρέχει, *the shape or fashion* (all that is apparent or sensible) *in this present world doth flit, and soon gives us the go-by:* We gaze a while upon these things, as *in transitu*, or *intra conspectum*; as they pass by us, and keep a while in sight; but they are presently gone from us, or we from them. They are but

a kind of negligence and unconcernedness about these things. *The world* (saith St. John) *passeth away, and the desire thereof*; whatever seemeth most lovely and desirable in the World is very flitting; however our desire and our enjoyment thereof must suddenly cease. Imagine a man therefore possessed of all worldly goods, arm'd with power, flourishing in credit, flowing with Plenty, swimming in all delight (such as were sometime *Priamus*, *Polycrates*, *Cræ-*

ly call or (if he consider well) heartily esteem himself happy; a man cannot hence (as the most able judge, and trusty voucher of the commodities doth pronounce) *receive profit or content from any labour he taketh* (upon these transi-

Primum est, ut quanti quidque sit iudices; secundum, ut impetum ad illa capias ordinatum temperaturumque; tertium, ut inter impetum tuum, actionemque conveniat, ut in omnibus istis tibi ipse consentias. Sen. Epist. 80.

-----πάντα παρέρχεται ἡμᾶς,
 'Εἰ ὃ μὴ, ἀλλ' αὐτοῖς πάντα παφε-
 ρόμεθα. Gr. Epig. Anthol.

1 John 2. 17.
Ἐπιθυμία
αὐτῆς.

Ecc. 1. 3, &c.

tory things) *under the sun*. Why then (let me inquire) do we so cumber our heads with care; so rack our hearts with passion, so waste our spirits with incessant toil about these transitory things? why do we so highly value, so ardently desire, so eagerly pursue, so fondly delight in, so impatiently want, or lose, so passionately contend for and emulate one another in regard to these bubbles; forfeiting and foregoing our homebred most pretious goods, tranquillity and repose, either of mind or body, for them? Why erect we such mighty fabricks of expectation and confidence upon such unsteady sands? why dress we up these our Inns, as if they were our homes, and are as careful about a few nights lodging here, as if we designed an everlasting abode (we that are but *sojourners and pilgrims* here, and have no fixed habitation upon earth; who come forth like a flower, and are soon cut down; flee like a shadow and continue not; are winds passing away, and coming not again; who fade all like a leaf, whose life is a vapour appearing for a little time, and then vanishing away; whose days are a hand-breadth, and age is nothing; whose days are consumed like smok, and years are spent as a tale. Who wither like the grass, upon which we feed; and crumble as the dust, of which we are compacted; for thus the Scripture by apposite comparisons represents our condition) yet we build (like the Men of *Agrigentum*) as if we were to dwell here for ever; and hoard up, as if we were to enjoy after many ages; and inquire, as if we would never have done knowing? The Citizens of *Croton* (a Town in *Italy*) had a manner (it is said) of inviting to Feasts a Year before the time, that the Guests in appetite and garb might come well prepared to them; do we not usually resemble them in this ridiculous solicitude and curiosity; *spes inchoando longas*, commencing designs, driving on projects, which a longer time than our life would not suffice to accomplish? How deeply do we concern our selves in all that is said or done; when the morrow all will be done away and forgotten? when (excepting what our duty to God, and charity towards men requires of us, and that which concerns our future eternal state) what is done in the World, who gets or loses, which of the spokes in fortune's wheel is up, and which down, is of very little consequence to us. But the more to abstract our minds from, and temper our affections about these secular matters, let us examine particularly by this standard, whether the most valued things in this World deserve that estimate which they bear in the common Market, or which popular opinion assigns them.

1. To begin then with that which takes chief place, which the World most dotes on, which seems most great and eminent among men; secular state and grandeur, might and prowess, honour and reputation, favour and applause of men, all the objects of humane pride and ambition: of this kind, St. Peter thus pronounces *πᾶσα δόξα ἀνθρώπων, All the glory of men is as the flower of the grass; the grass is dried up, and the flower thereof doth fall off*; 'tis as the flower of the grass, how specious soever, yet the most fading and falling part thereof; the grass it self will soon wither, and the flower doth commonly fall off before that. We cannot hold this flower of worldly glory beyond our short time of life; and we may easily much sooner be deprived of it: Many tempests of fortune may beat it down, many violent hands may crop it, 'tis apt of its self to fade upon the stalk; however the sun (the influence of age and time) will assuredly burn and dry it up, with our life that upholds it. Surely (saith the Psalmist) *men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree are a lye*: Men of high degree; The mighty Princes, the famous Captains, the subtile Statesmen, the grave Senatours; they who turn and toss about the World at their pleasure; who, (in the Prophet's language) *make the Earth tremble, and shake Kingdoms*: Even these, they are a lye; (saith he, who himself was none of the least considerable among them, and by experience well knew their condition, the greatest and most glorious Man of his time, King David.) They are a lye; that is, their state presents something of brave and admirable to the eye of Men; but 'tis only *deceptio visus*; a shew without a substance; it doth but delude the careless spectatours with false appearance; it hath nothing under it solid or stable; being laid in the balance (the royal Prophet there subjoyns; that is, being weighed in the scales of right judgment, being thoroughly considered) it will prove lighter than vanity it self; it is less valuable than mere empti-

ness,

Commorandi
natura nobis di-
versorium dedit
non habitandi
locum. Cic. de
Sen.

1 Pet. 2. 11. 1.

Heb. 13. 11.

1. 15.

1 Chron. 29.

15.

Job 14. 1.

Psal. 78. 39.

Jam. 4. 14.

Isa. 64. 6.

Psal. 102. 3.

90. 5. 9. 103.

15. 39. 5.

144. 4. 119.

19.

Psal. 103. 15.

Isa. 40. 6.

1 Pet. 2. 4.

Psalm. 62. 9.

Isa. 14. 17.

ness, and nothing it self; that saying sounds like an *hyperbole*, but it may be true in a strict sense: Seeing, that the care and pains in maintaining it, the fear and jealousy of losing it, the envy, obloquy and danger that surround it, the snares it hath in it, and temptations inclining men to be puffed up with Pride; to be insolent and injurious, to be corrupted with pleasure (with other bad concomitants thereof) do more than countervail what-ever either imaginary worth or real convenience may be in it. Perhaps could it without much care, trouble and hazard continue for ever, or for a long time; it might be thought somewhat considerable; but since its duration is uncertain and short; since *man in honour abideth not, but is like the beasts that perish*; that they who look so like Gods, and are called so, and are worshipped as so, yet must die like men (like men, yea like sheep shall be laid in the grave;) Since, as 'tis said of the King of Babylon in *Esay*; *their pomp must be brought down to the grave, and the noise of their viols; the worm shall be spread under them, and the worm shall cover them*; seeing that a moment of time shall extinguish all their lustre, and still all that tumult about them; that they must be disrobed of their Purple, and be cloathed with Corruption; that their so spacious and splendid Palaces must soon be exchanged for close daksome Coffins; that both their own breath, and the breath of them who now applaud them must be stopped; that they who now bow to them, may presently trample on them; and they who to day trembled at their presence, may the morrow scornfully insult upon their memory: *Is this the man* (will they say, as they did of that great King) *who made the Earth to tremble; that did shake Kingdoms; that made the World as a Wilderness; and destroyed the Kingdoms thereof?* Since this is the fate of the greatest, and most glorious among Men, what reason can there be to admire their condition; to prize such vain and short-liv'd preeminences? For who can account it a great happiness to be styled and respected as a Prince, to enjoy all the Powers and Prerogatives of highest dignity for a day or two; then being obliged to descend into a sordid and despicable estate? Who values the fortune of him that is brought forth upon the Stage to act the Part of a Prince; though he be attired there, and attended as such; hath all the garb and ceremony, the ensigns and appurtenances of Majesty about him; speaks and behaves himself imperiously; is flattered and worshipped accordingly; yet, who in his heart doth adore this Idol; doth admire this mockery of greatness? Why not? because after an hour or two the Play is over, and this Man's reign is done. And what great difference is there between this and the greatest worldly state? between *Alexander* in the History, and *Alexander* on the Stage? Are not (in the *Psalmist's* account) *all our years spent as a tale that is told*; or, as a Fable, that is acted? This in comparison of that, what is it at most, but telling the same story, acting the same Part a few times over? What are a few years more than a few hours repeated not very often? not so often as to make any considerable difference; so a great Emperor reflected; *τί διαφέρει τεχμυρεῖς* (said he) *doth the age of an infant, dying within three days, differ from that of Nestor, who lived three ages of men*; since both shall be past and ended; both then meet, and thereby become equal; since considering the immense time that runs on, and how little a part thereof any of us takes up. (*juvenes & senes in equo sumus*) we are all alike young and old; as a drop and a Pint bottle in compare to the Ocean are in a sort equal, that is, both altogether inconsiderable. *Quid enim diu est, ubi finis est?* saith St. *Austine*: *what can be long that shall be ended*; which coming to that pass is as if it never had been? Since then upon this account (upon worldly accounts, I speak all this; and excepting that Dignity and Power may be Talents bestowed by God, or advantages to serve God, and promote the good of Men; excepting also the relation Persons justly instated in them bear to God as his Deputies and Ministers; in which respects much reverence is due to their Persons, much value to their Places; even the more, by how much less their present outward Estate is considerable, and because at present they receive so slender a reward for all their cares and pains employed in the discharge of their Offices; this I interpose to prevent mistakes, lest our discourse should seem to disparage, or detract from the reverence due to persons in eminent Place. But since, under this

Psal. 82. 6.

Psal. 49. 12.

Isa. 14. 11.

Isa. 14. 16.

Psal. 90.

Anton. IV. 50.

Sen. Ep. 99.

24.

Mihi ne diuturnum quidem quidquam videtur, in quo est aliquid extremum, &c.
Cic. de Senect.

this caution) all worldly Power and Glory appear so little valuable; the consideration hereof may avail to moderate our affections about them; to quell all ambitious desires of them, and all vain complacencies in them. For why should we so eagerly seek and pursue such empty shadows, which if we catch, we in effect catch nothing; and whatever it is, doth presently slip out of our hands? Why do we please our selves in such evanid dreams? Is it not much better to rest quiet and content in any station wherein God hath placed us, than to trouble our selves and others in climbing higher to a Precipice, where we can hardly stand upright, and whence we shall certainly tumble down into the grave? This Consideration is also a remedy, proper to remove all regret and envy grounded upon such regards? For why, though suppose Men of small worth, or virtue should flourish in Honour and Power, shall we repine thereat? Is it not as if one should envy to a Butterfly its gaudy Wings, to a Tulip its beautiful colours, to the Grass its pleasant verdure; that Grass, to which in this *Psalms* we are compared; *which in the morning flourisheth, and groweth up, in the evening is cut down and withereth*? I may say of this discourse with the *Philosopher*, ἰδωτικὸν μὲν, ὅμως δὲ ἀνυτικὸν βόηθημα, 'tis a homely remedy (there may be divers better ones) yet hath its efficacy; for *David* himself made use thereof more than once: *Be not, saith he, afraid* (or troubled) *when one is made rich, when the glory of his house is increased; for when he dieth he shall carry nothing away, his glory shall not descend with him. I was* (saith he again) *envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked; but I went into the sanctuary, then understood I their end; surely thou didst set them in slippery places—how are they brought into desolation as in a moment*: Thus considering the lubricity and transitoriness of that Prosperity, which foolish and wicked Men enjoyed, did serve to cure that envious distemper, which began to affect the good man's Heart.

2. But let us descend from Dignity and Power (that is, from names and shews) to somewhat seeming more real and substantial, to Riches; that great and general Idol, the most devoutly adored that ever any hath been in the World; which hath a Temple almost in every House, an Altar in every Heart; to the gaining of which most of the thoughts, most of the labours of Men immediately tend; in the Possession of which Men commonly deem the greatest Happiness doth consist. But this consideration we discourse about, will easily discover, that even this, as all other Idols, is *nothing in the World*, nothing true and solid; Will (I say) justify that advice and verifie that assertion of the *Wise-man*: *Labour not for riches, wilt thou set thy heart upon that which is not?* it, well applied, will pluck down the high places reared to this great Idol of Clay in Mens Hearts; will confute the common Conceits and Phrases, which so beautifie Wealth; shewing that whoever dotes thereon is more truly and properly styled a miserable Man, than a happy, or blessed one: For is he not indeed miserable, who *makes lies his refuge*, who confides in that which will deceive and disappoint him? The *Prophet* assures us so: *Woe* (saith the *Prophet Habbakkuk*) *woe be to him, who coveteth an evil covetousness to his house; that he may set his nest on high, that he may be delivered from the power of evil*: Men (he implies) imagine by getting Riches, they have secured and raised themselves above the reach of all mischief: But ye see it was in the *Prophet's* judgment a woful mistake. *St. Paul* doth warn Men (very emphatically) *not to hope ἐπὶ πλεῖσι ἀδυνατίῃ, in the uncertainty* (or obscurity) *of riches*; intimating, that to trust in them, is to trust in darkness it self; in that wherein we can discern nothing; in we know not what? They are, we cannot but observe, subject to an infinity of chances, many of them obvious and notorious; more of them secret and unaccountable: *They make* (the *Wise-man* tells us) *themselves wings* (they need it seems no help for that) *and fly away like as an eagle toward heaven* (quite out of sight, and beyond our reach, they of their own accord do swiftly fly away) however, should they be disposed to stay with us, we must fly from them; were they inseparably affixed to this life, yet must they together with that be severed from us; as we came naked of them into this World, so naked shall we return: *As he came*, saith the *Preacher*, *so shall he go; and what profit* (then) *hath he that laboureth for the wind?* From hence, that we must so soon part with riches, he infers them to

Psal. 90. 6.

Ant. IV. 50.

Psal. 49. 16.
73. 17. 37. 11.

Prov. 23. 17.

1 Cor. 8. 4.

Prov. 23. 5.

* OAG:G.
Beatus. &c.
pro divite.
Hab. 2. 9.

1 Tim. 6. 19.

Prov. 23. 5.

Job 1. 21.
27. 19.1 Tim. 6. 7.
Eccl. 5. 21.

to be but wind; a thing not any wise to be fixed or settled; which 'tis vain to think we can appropriate, or retain; and vain therefore greedily to covet, or pursue: So the *Psalmist* also reasons it: *Surely, every man* (saith he) *walketh in a vain shew; surely they are disquieted in vain; he heapeth up riches, and knoweth not who shall gather them.* Men, in his account, that troubled themselves in accumulating Wealth, did but idly delude themselves, fancying to receive content from such things, which they must themselves soon be separated from; and leave at uncertainties, to be disposed of they know not how: That which in his wise Son's esteem was sufficient to make a man hate all his labour under the sun: Because, saith he, *I shall leave it to the man that shall be after me, and who knoweth, whether he shall be a wise man or a fool? yet he shall have rule over all my labour, wherein I have laboured, and wherein I have shewed my self wise under the sun:* All it seems, that we are so wise, and so industrious about; that we so beat our heads about, and spend our spirits upon, is at most but *gaudium heredis*; the joy of an heir, and that an uncertain one (for your Son, your Kinsman, your Friend may for all you can know die before you, or soon after you) 'tis but a being at great pains and charges in tilling the Land, and sowing and dressing it; whence we are sure not to reap any benefit to our selves, and cannot know who shall do it.

In his elaborant, qua sciunt nihil omnino ad se pertinere; serunt arbores qua alteri seculo profint. C. c. de Senect.

The rich man (St. James tells us) as the flower of the grass shall he pass away; for the sun is no sooner risen with a burning heat, but it withereth the grass, and the flower thereof falleth, and the grace of the fashion thereof perisheth; So also shall the rich man fade in his ways; all the comfort (we see by the *Apostle's* discourse) and the convenience, all the grace and ornament that riches are supposed to yield will certainly wither and decay, either before, or with us; whenever the sun (that is, either some extream mischance in life, or the certain destiny of death) doth arise, and make impression on them. But our Saviour hath best set out the nature and condition of these things in that *Parable* concerning the man, who having had a plentiful crop of Corn, and having projected for the disposal of it, resolved then to bless himself, and entertain his mind with pleasing discourses, that having; in readiness and security, so copious accommodations, he might now enjoy himself with full satisfaction and delight; not considering, that though his Barns were full, his life was not sure; that God's Pleasure might soon interrupt his Pastime; that the fearful sentence might presently be pronounced; *Thou fool, this night thy life shall be required of thee, and what thou hast prepared, to whom shall it fall?* Euripides calls riches φιλόψυχον χεῖμα, a thing which much endears life; or makes men greatly love it; but they do not enable at all to keep it: There is no ἀντάλλαγμα ψυχῆς, no price, or ransom equivalent to life; all that a man hath, he would give to redeem it, but it is a purchase too dear for all the riches in the World to compass; so the *Psalmist* tells us, *They that trust in their wealth, and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches, none of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him; for the redemption of their soul is precious: They cannot redeem their Brother's soul, or life; nor therefore their own; for all souls are of the same value, all greatly surpass the price of gold and silver. Life was not given us for perpetuity, but lent, or deposited with us; And without delay or evasion it must be resigned into the hand of its just Owner, when he shall please to demand it; and although righteousness may, yet riches (as the Wise-man tells us) cannot deliver from death, nor at all profit us in the day of wrath.* Could we probably retain our Possessions, forever in our hands; nay, could we certainly foresee some considerable long definite time, in which we might enjoy our stores, it were perhaps somewhat excusable to scrape and hoard, it might look like rational Providence, it might yield some valuable satisfaction; but since, *Rape, congere, aufer, posside, statim relinquendum est*; since, as Solomon tells us, *Riches are not for ever, nor doth the Crown endure to every generation; yea, since they must be left very soon, nor is there any certainty of keeping them any time; that one day may consume them, one night may dispossess us of them and our life together with them, there can be no reason why we should be solicitous about them; no account given of our setting so high a rate upon them.*

For who would much regard the having custody of a rich treasure for a day or two, then to be stripped of all, and left bare? To be to day invested in large demains, and to morrow to be dispossessed of them? No Man surely would be so fond, as much to affect the condition. Yet this is our case; whatever we call ours, we are but guardians thereof for a few days. This consideration therefore may serve to repress, or moderate in us all covetous desires, proud conceits, vain confidences and satisfactions in respect to worldly Wealth; to induce us (in Job's language) *not to make gold our hope, nor to say to the fine gold, thou art my confidence; not to rejoyce because our wealth is great, and because our hand hath gotten much*; to extirpate from our hearts that root of all evil, the love of Money. For if, as the Preacher thought, the greatest pleasure or benefit accruing from them, is but looking upon them for a while, (*what good, saith he, is there to the owners thereof, saving the beholding of them with their eyes?*) if a little will, nay must suffice our natural appetites, and our present necessities; if more than needs, is but (as the Scripture teaches us) *a trouble* disquieting our minds with care; *a dangerous snare*, drawing us into mischief and sorrow; if this, I say, be their present quality; and were it better yet, could it last for any certain, or any long continuance, is it not evidently better to enjoy that pittance God hath allotted us with ease and contentation of mind; or if we want a necessary supply, to employ only a moderate diligence in getting thereof by the fairest means, which with God's blessing promised thereto, will never fail to procure a competence, and with this to rest content; than with those in Amos, *to pant after the dust of the earth; to lade our selves with thick clay*; to thirst insatiably after floods of glod, to heap up mountains of treasure, to extend unmeasurably our possessions, (*joyning house to house, and laying field to field, till there be no place, that we may be placed alone in the midst of the earth*; as the Prophet Esay doth excellently describe the covetous Man's humour) than, I say, thus incessantly to toil for the maintenance of this frail body, this flitting breath of ours? If Divine Bounty hath freely imparted a plentiful estate upon us, we should indeed bless God for it; *making our selves friends* thereby (as our Saviour advises us) employing it to God's Praise and Service; to the relief and comfort of our Brethren that need; but to seek it earnestly, to set our heart upon it, to relye thereon; to be greatly pleased or elevated in mind thereby, as it argues much infidelity and prophaneness of heart, so it signifies much inconsiderateness and folly, the ignorance of its nature, the forgetfulness of our own condition, upon the grounds discoursed upon.

3. Now in the next place; for Pleasure, that great Witch, which so enchants the World, and which by its mischievous Baits so allures Mankind into sin and misery; although this consideration be not altogether necessary to disparage it (its own nature sufficing to that; for it is more transitory than the shortest life, it dyes in the very enjoyment) yet it may conduce to our wise and good practice in respect thereto, by tempering the sweetness thereof, yea souring its relish to us; minding us of its insufficiency and unserviceableness to the felicity of a mortal creature; yea, its extreemly dangerous consequences to a soul, that must survive the short enjoyment thereof. Some Persons indeed, ignorant or incredulous of a future estate; presuming of no sense remaining after death, nor regarding any account to be rendred of this life's actions, have encouraged themselves and others in the free enjoyment of present sensualities, upon the score of our life's shortness and uncertainty; inculcating such *Maxims* as these:

— *Brevis est hic fructus homullis;*

— *post mortem nulla voluptas.*

Lucr.
Quem fors dierum cinque dabit, lucro
Appone, nec dulces amores
Sperne puer, &c.

Hor. l. 9.

1 Cor. 15. 34.

Sap. 2. 1, &c.

before it snatches all from us. The Author of *Wisdom* observeth, and thus represents these Mens discourse: *Our life is short and tedious; and in the death of a man there is no remedy; neither was there any man known to have returned from the grave*: — *Come on therefore, let us enjoy the good things that are present;*

present; let us speedily use the creatures like as in youth; Let us fill our selves with costly wine and ointments; and let no flower of the spring pass by us, let us crown our selves with rose-buds before they be withered; let none of us go without his part of voluptuousness — for this is our portion, and our lot is this. Thus, and no wonder, have some men, conceiving themselves beasts, resolved to live as such; renouncing all sober care becoming men, and drowning their reason in brutish sensualities; yet no question, the very same reflection, that this life would soon pass away, and that death might speedily attack them, did not a little quash their mirth, and damp their pleasure. To think, that this perhaps might be the last Banquet they should taste of; that they should themselves shortly become the feast of Worms and Serpents, could not but somewhat spoil the gust of their highest delicacies, and disturb the sport of their loudest jovialties; but, in Job's expression, *make the meat in their bowels to turn, and be as the gall of Asps within them.* Those customary enjoyments did so enamour them of sensual delight, that they could not without pungent regret imagine a necessity of soon for ever parting with them; and so their very Pleasure was by this thought made distastful and embittered to them. So did the Wiseman observe: *O death, how bitter is the remembrance of thee to a man that liveth at rest in his possessions; unto the man that hath nothing to vex him; and that hath prosperity in all things; Tea (adds he) unto him, that is yet able to receive meat:* And how bitter then must the remembrance thereof be to him, who walloweth in all kind of corporal satisfaction and delight; that placeth all his happiness in sensual enjoyment? However, as to us, who are better instructed and affected; who know and believe a future state; the consideration, that the time of enjoying these delights will soon be over; that this World's jollity is but like *the crackling of thorns under a pot* (which yields a brisk sound, and a chearful blaze; but heats little, and incessantly passes away) that they leave no good fruits behind them, but do only corrupt and enervate our minds; war against, and hurt our souls; tempt us to sin, and involve us in guilt; that therefore Solomon was surely in the right, when he said of laughter, that it is mad, and of mirth, what doeth it? (that is, that the highest of these delights are very irrational impertinences) and of intemperance; that, at the last, *it biteth like a Serpent, and stingeth like an Adder;* with us, I say, who reflect thus, that (περὶ σαρκὸς ἀμαρτίας ἀπολαυσίς) *enjoyment of sinful pleasure for a season cannot obtain much esteem and love; but will rather, I hope, be despised and abhorred by us.* I will add only,

4. Concerning secular Wisdom and Knowledge; the which Men do also commonly with great earnestness and ambition seek after, as the most specious ornament, and pure content of their mind; this consideration doth also detect the just value thereof; so as to allay intemperate ardour toward it, pride and conceitedness upon the having or seeming to have it, envy and emulation about it. For imagine, if you please, a Man accomplished with all varieties of learning commendable, able to recount all the stories that have been ever written (or the deeds acted) since the World's beginning; to understand, or with the most delightful fluency and elegancy to speak all the languages, that have at any time been in use among the sons of men; skilful in twisting and untwisting all kinds of subtilties; versed in all sorts of natural experiments, and ready to assign plausible conjectures about the causes of them; studied in all Books whatever, and in all Monuments of Antiquity; deeply knowing in all the mysteries of art, or science, or policy, such as have ever been devised by humane wit, or study or observation; yet all this, such is the pity, he must be forced presently to abandon; all the use he could make of all his notions, the pleasure he might find in them, the reputation accruing to him from them must at that fatal minute vanish; *his breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth, in that very day his thoughts perish.* There is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave, whither he goeth. 'Tis seen (saith the Psalmist, seen indeed every day, and observed by all) that wise men die; likewise the fool and brutish person perisheth; one event happeneth to them both; there is no remembrance of the wise more than of the fool for ever; (both dye alike, both alike are forgotten) as the wisest man himself, did (not without some distast) ob-

Δοκῇ γὰρ ἡ σοφία θάυμας ἀς ἡδονὰς
ἔχειν καὶ ἀειδιότι, καὶ τῷ ἑαίῳ. Arist.
Eth. X. 7.

Psal. 46. 4.
Eccles. 9. 10.

Psal. 49. 10.
Eccles. 2. 14;
15. &c.

serve and complain. All our subtile conceits, and nice criticisms; all our fine inventions and goodly speculations shall be swallowed up either in the utter darkness, or in the clearer light of the future state. One Potion* of that *Le-*

Psal. 88. 12.

Τὴν δ' ἰσοκρεΐτης διατρίβει ἐπι-
σκέψεων, γρηγορῶν φησι παρ' αὐτῶ τὴς
μαθητάς, ὡς ἐν αὐτῇ χρησομένης τῇ τε-
χναίς, καὶ δίκας ἐρευντάς. Cato Sen. a-
pud Plut. pag. 641.

thean cup (which we must all take down upon our entrance into that *Land of forgetfulness*) will probably drown the memory, deface the shape of all those *Ideas*, with which we have here stuffed our minds; however they are not like to be of use to us in that new, so different, state; where none of our languages are spoken; none of our experience

will sute; where all things have quite another face unknown, unthought of by us. Where *Aristotle*, and *Varro* shall appear mere Idiots; *Demosthenes* and *Cicero* shall become very infants; the wisest and eloquentest *Greeks* will prove senseless and dumb *Barbarians*; where all our Authors shall have no authority; where we must all go fresh to school again; must unlearn perhaps, what in these misty regions we thought our selves best to know; and begin to learn, what we not once ever dream'd of; Doth therefore, I pray you, so transitory and fruitless a good (for it self I mean and excepting our duty to God, or the reasonable diligence we are bound to use in our calling) deserve such anxious desire; or so restless toil; so careful attention of mind, or assiduous pain of body about it? doth it become us to contend, or emulate so much about it? Above all, do we not most unreasonably, and against the nature of the thing it self we pretend to (that is ignorantly and foolishly) if we are proud and conceited, much value our selves or contemn others, in respect thereto? *Solomon* the most experienced in this matter, and best able to judge thereof (He that gave his heart to seek and search out by wisdom concerning all things, that had been done under Heaven, and this with extream success; even he) passeth the same sentence of vanity, vexation and unprofitableness, upon this, as upon all other subcelestial things. True, he commends wisdom

Διπλὴν ὁρᾶσιν
οἱ μαθόντες
γρῆματα.
Eccl. 2. 15.

as an excellent and useful thing comparatively; *exceeding folly, so far as light exceedeth darkness*; But since light it self is not permanent, but must give way to darkness; the difference soon vanished; and his opinion thereof abated; considering, that as it happened to the fool, so it happened to him, he breaks into that expostulation: *And why then was I more wise?* to what purpose was such a distinction made, that signified in effect so little? And indeed the Testimony of this great personage may serve for a good *Epilogue* to all this discourse, discovering sufficiently the slender worth of all earthly things: Seeing he, that had given himself industriously to experiment the worth of all things here below, to sound the depth of their utmost perfection and use; who had all the advantages imaginable of performing it; Who flourished in the greatest magnificences of worldly pomp and power; who enjoyed an incredible affluence of all riches; who tasted all varieties of most exquisite pleasures; whose heart was (by God's special gift, and by his own industrious care) enlarged with all kind of knowledge (furnished with notions many as the *Sand upon the Sea shore*) above all that were before him; who had possessed and enjoyed all that fancy could conceive, or heart could wish, and had arrived to the top of secular Happiness; Yet even *He* with pathetical reiteration pronounces all to be *vanity and vexation of spirit*; altogether unprofitable and unsatisfactory to the mind of Man. And so therefore we may justly conclude them to be; so finishing the first grand advantage this present consideration affordeth us in order to that wisdom, to which we should apply our hearts:

1 Kings 4. 29.

I should proceed to gather other good fruits, which it is apt to produce, and contribute to the same purpose; but since my thoughts have taken so large scope upon that former head, so that I have already too much, I fear, exercised your patience, I shall only mention the rest. As this consideration doth, as we have seen, First, dispose us rightly to value these temporal goods, and moderate our affections about them; so it doth, Secondly, in like manner, conduce to the right estimation of temporal evils; and thereby to the well tempering our passions in the resentment of them; to the begetting of patience and contentedness in our minds. Also, Thirdly, it may help us to value, and excite us to regard those things (good or evil) which relate to our future state; being the things only of a permanent nature, and of an everlasting

ing consequence to us. Fourthly, It will engage us to husband carefully and well employ this short time of our present life: Not to defer or procrastinate our endeavours to live well; not to be lazy and loitering in the dispatch of our only considerable business, relating to eternity; to embrace all opportunities, and improve all means; and follow the best *compendiums* of good practice leading to eternal bliss. Fifthly, It will be apt to confer much toward the begetting and preserving sincerity in our thoughts, words and actions; causing us to decline all oblique designs upon present mean interests, or base regards to the opinions or affections of men; bearing single respects to our conscience and duty in our actions; Teaching us to speak as we mean; and be what we would seem; to be in our hearts and in our closets, what we appear in our outward expressions and conversations with Men; For considering, that within a very short time all the thoughts of our hearts shall be disclosed; and all the actions of our lives exposed to publick view (being strictly to be examined at the great bar of divine judgment before Angels and Men) we cannot but perceive it to be the greatest folly in the World, for this short present time to disguise our selves; to conceal our intentions, or smother our actions. What hath occurred (upon these important subjects) to my meditation, I must at present, in regard to your patience, omit. I shall close all with that good *Collect* of our Church.

Almighty God, give us grace, that we may cast away the works of darkness, and put upon us the armour of light now in the time of this mortal life, in which thy Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious Majesty to judge both the quick and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal, through him, who liveth and reigneth with thee, and the Holy Ghost, now and ever. Amen.

S E R M O N XV.

The Consideration of our Latter End.

P S A L. xc. 12.

So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.

IN discoursing formerly upon these words (expounded according to the most common and passable interpretation) that which I chiefly observed was this: That the serious consideration of the shortness and frailty of our life is a fit mean or rational instrument subservient to the bringing our hearts to wisdom; that is, to the making us discern, attend unto, embrace, and prosecute such things, as according to the dictates of right reason are truly best for us.

Job 14. 14.
All the days of
my appointed
time will I
wait, till my
change come.

I. The truth of which observation I largely declared from hence, that the said consideration disposeth us to judge rightly about those goods (which ordinarily court and tempt us, *viz.* worldly glory and honour; riches, pleasure, knowledge; to which I might have added wit, strength and beauty) what their just worth and value is; and consequently to moderate our affections, our cares, our endeavours about them; for that if all those goods be uncertain and transitory, there can be no great reason to prize them much, or to affect them vehemently, or to spend much care and pains about them.

• II. I shall next in the same scales weigh our temporal evils; and say, that also, The consideration of our lives brevity and frailty doth avail to the passing a true judgment of, and consequently to the governing our passions, and ordering our behaviour in respect to all those temporal evils, which either according to the Law of our nature, or the fortuitous course of things, or the particular dispensation of providence do befall us. Upon the declaration of which point I need not insist much, since what was before discoursed concerning the opposite goods doth plainly enough infer it; more immediately indeed in regard to the *mala damni*, or *privationis* (the evils which consist only in the want, or loss of temporal goods) but sufficiently also by a manifest parity of reason in respect to the *mala sensus*, the real pains, crosses and inconveniences, that assail us in this life. For if worldly glory do hence appear to be no more than a transient blaze, a fading shew, a hollow sound, a piece of theatrical pageantry, the want thereof cannot be very considerable to us. Obscurity of condition (living in a valley beneath that dangerous height, and deceitful lustre) cannot in reason be deemed a very sad or pitiful thing; which should displease, or discompose us; if we may thence learn that abundant wealth is rather a needless clog, or a perillous snare, than any great convenience to us; we cannot well esteem to be poor a great infelicity, or to undergo losses a grievous calamity; but rather a benefit to be free from the distractions that attend it; to have little to keep for others, little to care for our selves. If these present pleasures be discerned hence to be only wild fugitive dreams; out of which being soon roused we shall only find bitter regrets to abide; why should not the wanting opportunities of enjoying them be rather accounted a happy advantage, than any part of misery to us? If it seem, that the greatest perfection of curious knowledge (of what use or ornament soever) after it is hardly purchased, must soon be parted with; to be simple or ignorant will be no great matter of lamentation: as those will appear no solid goods, so these consequently must be only *umbræ malorum*, phantasms, or shadows of evil, rather than truly or substantially so; (evils created by fancy, and subsisting thereby; which reason should, and time will surely remove) That in being impatient or disconsolate for them, we are but like children, that fret and wail for the want of petty toys. And for the more real or positive evils such as violently assault nature, whose impressions no reason can so withstand, as to distinguish all distast or afflictive sense of them; yet this consideration will aid to abate and assuage them; affording a certain hope and prospect of approaching redress. It is often seen at Sea, that Men (from unacquaintance with such agitations, or from brackish streams arising from the salt Water) are heartily sick, and discover themselves to be so by apparently grievous symptoms; yet no man hardly there doth mind or pity them, because the malady is not supposed dangerous, and within a while will probably of it self pass over; or that however, the remedy is not far off; the sight of Land, a taste of the fresh air will relieve them: 'Tis near our Case: We passing over this troublesome Sea of life; from unexperience, joyned with the tenderness of our constitution, we cannot well endure the changes and crosses of fortune; to be tossed up and down; to suck in the sharp vapours of penury, disgrace, sickness, and the like, doth beget a qualm in our stomachs; make us nauseate all things, and appear sorely distempered; yet is not our condition so dismal, as it seems; we may grow hardier, and wear out our sense of affliction; however, the Land is not

Sen. Ep. 89.

Θάλασσαν πόντον δὲ ἀλγεῖν οὐκ ἔχει χεῖρον.
τὸ μὲν ἀλγέρον ἐξέρχεται τὸ δὲ χεῖρον
νίκτον φορητόν. Ant. VII. Sect. 33.

Summi doloris intentio invenit finem:
nemo potest valde dolore & diu: sic nos
amantissima nostri natura disposuit, ut do-
lorem aut tolerabilem, aut brevem faceret.
Sen. Ep. 24.

Dolore percussus mortem impleamus, eam-
que unam, ut miseriarum malorumque
terminum excipiamus. Cic. conf.

Moriar? hoc dicis; desinam agrotare pos-
se, &c. Sen.

far off, and by disembarking hence we shall suddenly be discharged of all our molestations. 'Tis a common solace of grief, approved by wise men, *si gravis, brevis est; si longus, levis*; if it be very grievous and acute it cannot continue long, without intermission or respite; if it abide long, it is supportable; intolerable pain is like lightning, it destroys us, or is it self instantly destroyed. However, death at length (which never is far off) will free us; be we never so much tossed with storms of misfortune, that is a sure haven; be we persecuted with never so many enemies, that is a safe refuge; let what pains or diseases soever infect us, that is an assured *Anodynon*, and infallible remedy for

for them all; however we be wearied with the labours of the day, the night will come and ease us; the grave will become a bed of rest unto us. Shall I die? I shall then cease to be sick; I shall be exempted from disgrace; I shall be enlarged from prison; I shall be no more pinched with want; no more tormented with pain. Death is a Winter, that as it withers the Rose and Lilly, so it kills the Nettle and Thistle; as it stifles all worldly joy and pleasure, so it suppresses all care and grief; as it hushes the voice of mirth and melody, so it stills the clamours and the sighs of misery; as it defaces all the World's glory, so it covers all disgrace, wipes off all tears, silences all complaint, buries all disquiet and discontent. King *Philip of Macedon* once threatened the *Spartans* to vex them sorely, and bring them into great straits; but, answered they, *can he hinder us from dying?* that indeed is a way of evading, which no enemy can obstruct, no Tyrant can debar Men from; they who can deprive of life, and its conveniences, cannot take away death from them. There is a place, *Job* tells us, *wheret the wicked cease from troubling, and where the weary be at rest; where the prisoners rest together; they hear not the voice of the oppressour; the small and great are there; and the servant is free from his Master.*

*Adm. ἔχον
Bonōd. ὅ
τρεῖς σκιά
Eriphra vitam
nemo nou ho-
mini potest; At
nemo mortem.
Sen. Trug.
Job 3. 17.*

*Ο μάλιστα πρὸ
χρόνου χαλ-
κός, καὶ οὐ
χαλκός, τὸ
λόγος. Plat. ad
Apol. p. 195.
Omnia brevia
tolerabilia esse
debent. etiam si
magna. Cic.
Lact. ad fin.*

'Tis therefore but holding out a while, and a deliverance from the worst this World can molest us with, shall of its own accord arrive unto us; in the mean time 'tis better that we at present owe the benefit of our comfort to reason, than afterward to time; by rational consideration to work patience and contentment in our selves; and to use the shortness of our life as an argument to sustain us in our affliction, than to find the end thereof only a natural and necessary means of our rescue from it. The contemplation of this cannot fail to yield something of courage and solace to us in the greatest pressures; these transient, and short-liv'd evils, if we consider them as so, cannot appear such horrid bugbears, as much to affright or dismay us; if we remember how short they are, we cannot esteem them so great, or so intolerable. There be, I must confess, divers more noble considerations, proper and available to cure discontent and impatience. The considering, that all these evils proceed from God's just will, and wise providence; unto which it is fit, and we upon all accounts are obliged readily to submit; that they do ordinarily come from God's goodness, and gracious design toward us; that they are medicines (although ungrateful, yet wholesome) administered by the Divine Wisdom to prevent, remove or abate our distempers of soul (to allay the tumours of pride, to cool the fevers of intemperate desire; to rouse us from the lethargy of sloath; to stop the gangrene of bad conscience) that they are fatherly corrections intended to reclaim us from sin, and excite us to duty; that they serve as instruments or occasions to exercise, to try, to refine our virtue; to beget in us the hope, to qualify us for the reception of better rewards; such discourses indeed are of a better nature, and have a more excellent kind of efficacy; yet no fit help, no good art, no just weapon is to be quite neglected in the combat against our spiritual foes. A Pebble-stone hath been sometimes found more convenient than a Sword or a Spear to slay a Giant. Baser remedies (by reason of the Patient's constitution, or circumstances) do sometime produce good effect, when others in their own nature more rich and potent want efficacy. And surely frequent reflections upon our mortality, and living under the sense of our lives frailty, cannot but conduce somewhat to the begetting in us an indifferency of mind toward all these temporal occurrents; to extenuate both the goods and the evils we here meet with; consequently therefore to compose and calm our passions about them.

III. But I proceed to another use of that consideration we speak of emergent from the former, but so as to improve it to higher purposes. For since it is useful to the diminishing our admiration of these worldly things, to the withdrawing our affections from them, to the slackning our endeavours about them; it will follow that it must conduce also to beget an esteem, a desire, a prosecution of things conducing to our future welfare; both by removing the obstacles of doing so, and by engaging us to consider the importance of those things in comparison with these. By removing obstacles, I say; for while our hearts are possessed with regard and passion toward these present things, there can be no room left in them for respect and affection toward things future.

'Tis

'Tis in our soul as in the rest of nature; there can be no penetration of objects (as it were) in our hearts, nor any vacuity in them; our mind no more than our body can be in several places, or tend several ways, or abide in perfect rest; yet somewhere it will always be; some-whither it will always go; some-what it will ever be doing. If we *have a treasure* here (some-what we greatly like and much confide in) *our hearts will be here* with it; and if here, they cannot be elsewhere; they will be taken up; they will rest satisfied; they will not care to seek farther. If we affect worldly glory, and delight in the applause of men, we shall not be so careful to please God, and seek his favour. If we admire and repose confidence in riches, it will make us neglectful of God, and distrustful of his Providence; if our mind thirsts after, and sucks in greedily sensual pleasures, we shall not relish spiritual delights, attending the practice of virtue and piety, or arising from good conscience; adhering to, attending upon Masters of so different, so opposite a quality is inconsistent; they cannot abide peaceably together, they cannot both rule in our narrow breasts; we shall love and hold to the one; hate and despise the other.

If any man love the World, the love of the Father is not in him; the love of the World, as the present guest, so occupies and fills the room; that it will not admit, cannot hold the love of God. But when the heart is discharged and emptied of these things; when we begin to despise them as base and vain; to distast them as insipid and unfavoury; then naturally will succeed a desire after other things promising a more solid content; and desire will breed endeavour; and endeavour (furthered by God's assistance always ready to back it) will yield such a glimpse and taste of those things, as will so comfort and satisfy our minds, that thereby they will be drawn and engaged into a more earnest prosecution of them. When (I say) driving on ambitious Projects, heaping up Wealth, providing for the flesh (by our reflecting on the shortness and frailty of our life) become so insipid to us, that we find little appetite to them, or relish in them; our restless minds will begin to hunger and thirst after righteousness, desiring some satisfaction thence: Discerning these secular and carnal fruitions to be mere *bushes* (the proper food of swine) we shall bethink ourselves of that better nourishment (of rational or spiritual comfort) which our Father's house doth afford to his children and servants. Being somewhat disentangled from the care of our farms and our trafficks; from yoking our oxen, and being married to our present delights; we may be at leisure, and in disposition to comply with divine invitations to entertainment spiritual. Experiencing, that our trade about these petty commodities turns to small account, and that in the end we shall be nothing richer thereby; reason will induce us with the Merchant in the Gospel to *sell all that we have* (to forego our present interests and designs) for the Purchasing that *rich Pearl* of God's Kingdom, which will yield so exceeding profit; the gain of present comfort to our conscience, and eternal happiness to our souls. In fine, when we consider seriously, that *we have here no abiding City*, but are only *sojourners and pilgrims upon Earth*; that all our care and pain here do regard only an uncertain and transitory state; and will therefore suddenly as to all fruit and benefit be lost unto us; this will suggest unto us, with the good Patriarchs, *to long after a better Countrey*; a more assured, and lasting state of life; where we may enjoy some certain and durable repose; to tend homeward, in our desires and hopes, toward those eternal mansions of joy and rest prepared for God's faithful servants in Heaven. Thus will this consideration help toward the bringing us to inquire after and regard the things concerning our future state; and in the result will engage us to compare them with these present things, as to our concernment in them and the consequence of them to our advantage or damage, whence a right judgment, and a congruous practice will naturally follow. There be four ways of comparing the things relating to this present life with those which respect our future state: Comparing the goods of this with the goods of that; the evils of this with the evils of that; the goods of this with the evils of that; the evils of this with the goods of that. All these comparisons we may find often made in Scripture; in order to the informing our judgment about the respective value of both sorts; the present consideration intervening, as a standard to measure and try them by.

First then; comparing the present goods with those which concern our future state, since the transitoriness and uncertainty of temporal goods detract from their worth, and render them in great degree contemptible; but the durability and certainty of spiritual goods doth encrease their rate, and make them exceedingly valuable; 'tis evident hence, that spiritual goods are infinitely to be preferred in our opinion, to be more willingly embraced, to be more zealously pursued than temporal goods, that, in case of competition, when both cannot be enjoyed, we are in reason obliged readily to part with all these, rather than to forfeit our title unto, or hazard our hope of those. Thus in the Scripture it is often discoursed: *The world* (saith St. John) *passeth away, and the desire thereof; but he that doeth the will of God, abideth for ever*: The World, and all that is desirable therein, is transient; but obedience to God's commandments is of an everlasting consequence; whence he infers, that we should *not love the world*; that is, not entertain such an affection thereto, as may any way prejudice the love of God, or hinder the obedience springing thence, or suitable thereto.

All flesh is grass (saith St. Peter) *and all the glory of man as the flower of the grass; the grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away; But the word of the Lord endureth for ever*: All worldly glory is frail and fading, but the Word of God is eternally firm and permanent; that is, the good things by God promised to them, who faithfully serve him, shall infallibly be conferred on them to their everlasting benefit; whence it follows, that, as he exhorts, we are bound to gird up the loins of our mind, to be sober, and hope to the end; to proceed and persist constantly in faithful obedience to God. *Charge those* (saith St. Paul) *who are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God; that they do good, be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; treasuring up for themselves a good foundation for the future; that they may attain everlasting life*: Since, argues he, present riches are of uncertain and short continuance; but faith and obedience to God, exercised in our charity and mercy toward men, are a certain stock improveable to our eternal interest; therefore be not proud of, nor relye upon those, but regard especially, and employ our selves upon these. Our Saviour himself doth often insist upon, and inculcate this comparison: *Treasure not unto your selves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust do corrupt; and where thieves break through and steal; but treasure up to your selves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not corrupt, and where thieves do not break through and steal. Do not take care for your soul, what ye shall eat, and what ye shall drink; nor for your body, what ye shall put on; but seek first the kingdom of God. Labour not for the food that perisheth, but for the food that abideth to eternal life; sell your substance, and give alms; provide your selves bags that wax not old; an indefectible treasure in the heavens*: Thus doth the Holy Scripture, setting forth the uncertainty and transitoriness of the present, the certainty and permanency of future goods, declare the excellency of these above those; advising thereupon, with highest reason, that we willingly reject those (in real effect, if need be, however always in ready disposition of mind) in order to the procuring or securing of these. It also, for our example and encouragement, commends to us the wisdom and virtue of those Persons, who have effectually practised this duty: of *Abraham, our Father* who, in expectation of that well-founded City, made and built by God, did readily desert his Countrey and Kindred, with all present accommodations of life; of *Moses*, who disregarded the splendours and delights of a great Court; rejected the alliance of a great Princess, and refused to be called the son of *Pharaoh's daughter*; in respect to the *μισθαποδοσία*, that future distribution of reward; a share wherein shall assuredly fall to them, who above all other considerations regard the performance of their duty to God; of the *Apostles*, who forsook all, Parents, Brethren, Lands, Houses, Trades, receipts of Custom, to follow *Christ*; him at present poor, and naked of all secular honour, power, wealth and delight; in hope only to receive from him divine benefits, and future preferments in his Kingdom; of *Mary*, who neglecting present affairs, and seating her self at *Jesus* his feet, attending to his discipline; is commended for her wisdom, in minding the *only necessary thing*; in chusing

Phil. 3. 7, 8. *the better part, which could never be taken from her*: of St. Paul, who accounted all his gains (all his worldly interests and privileges) to be damage, to be dung in respect to Christ, and the excellent knowledge of him, with the benefits thence accruing to them. On the contrary there we have Esau condemned and stigmatized for a prophane and a vain person, who (ἀντὶ μιᾶς βρώσεως) for one little eating-bout, one mess of Pottage (for a little present satisfaction of sense, or for the sustenance of this frail life) did withgo his birthright, that emblem of spiritual blessings and privileges. We have again represented to us that unhappy young Gentleman; who, though he had good qualities, rendering him amiable even to our Saviour; and had been trained up in the observance of God's Commandments; yet not being content to part with his large Possessions, in lieu of the treasure by Christ offered in Heaven, was reputed deficient; could find no acceptance with God, nor admission into his Kingdom; for a petty temporal commodity forfeiting an infinite eternal advantage. For, faith our Saviour, *He that loveth father or mother above me; he that doth not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yea his own life (for me and the Gospel) is not worthy of me, nor can be my disciple.* He that in his esteem or affection doth prefer any temporal advantages before the benefits tendred by our Saviour (yea doth not in comparison despise, renounce and reject his dearest contents of life, and the very capacity of enjoying them, his life it self) doth not deserve to be reckoned among the Disciples of Christ; to be so much as a Pretender to eternal joy, or a candidate of immortality. Our Saviour rejects all such unwise and perverse traders, who will not exchange brittle glafs for solid gold; counterfeit glistering stones for genuine most precious jewels; a garland of fading flowers for an incorruptible crown of Glory; a small temporary pension for a vastly rich freehold; *an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in the heavens.* Thus doth the Holy Scripture teach us to compare these sorts of good things;

And, secondly, so also doth it to compare the evils of both states; for that seeing, as the soon ceasing of temporal mischiefs should (in reasonable proceeding) diminish the fear of them, and mitigate the grief for them; so the incessant continuance of spiritual evils doth (according to just estimation) render them hugely grievous and formidable; 'tis plain, that we should much more dislike, abominate, and shun spiritual evils, than temporal; that we should make no question rather to endure these paroxysms of momentany pain, than incur those chronical and (indeed) incurable maladies; that we should run willingly into these shallow plashes of present inconvenience, rather than plunge our selves into those unfathomable depths of eternal misery. There is (I suppose) no man, who would not account it a very great calamity (such as hardly greater could befall him here) to have his right eye plucked out, and his right hand cut off, and his foot taken from him; to be deformed and maimed, so that he can do nothing, or stir any whither; yet our Lord represents these to us as inconsiderable evils, yea as things very eligible and advantageous in comparison of those mischiefs, which the voluntary not embracing them, in case we cannot otherwise than by so doing avoid sin, will bring on us: *συμφέρει σοι, it is (saith he) profitable for thee, that one of thy members be lost, rather than that thy whole body be cast into hell; καλόν σοι ἐστίν, 'tis good, 'tis excellent for thee to enter into life lame and maimed, and one ey'd, rather than having two hands and two feet, and two eyes, (in all integrity and beauty of this temporal, or corporal state) to be cast into eternal fire.* To be banished from ones native soil, secluded from all comforts of friendly acquaintance, divested irrecoverably of great estate and dignity; becoming a vagrant and a servant in vile employment, in a strange Countrey; every Man would be apt to deem a wretched condition; yet Moses, we see, freely chose it, rather than by enjoying unlawful pleasures at home, in Pharaoh's Court, to incur God's displeasure and vengeance: *συνεπαχθηδαι μάλλον ἐλθόν, chusing rather to undergo evil together with God's people, than to have πρόσκαιρον ἀμαρτίας ἀπόλαυσιν, a temporary fruition of sinful delight, dangerous to the welfare of his soul.* Death is commonly esteemed the most extreme and terrible of evils incident to man; yet our Saviour bids us not to regard or fear it, in comparison of that deadly ruin, which we adventure on by

by offending God: *I say unto you my friends* (saith he, he intended it for the most friendly advice) *Be not afraid of them that kill the body; and after that have nothing farther to do; but I will shew you whom ye shall fear; Fear him, who after he hath killed, hath power to cast into hell, to cast both body and soul into Hell, and destroy them therein; Yea, I say unto you* (so he inculcates and impresses it upon them) *fear him.*

Luke 12. 4.
Matt. 10. 28.
Ἀποκτείνει
δὲ τὰ σώματα,
βλάπτει δὲ τὴν ψυχήν.

But thirdly; Considering the good things of this life together with the evils of that, which is to come; Since enjoying these goods in comparison with enduring those evils is but rejoycing for a moment in respect of mourning to eternity; if upon the seeming sweetness of these enjoyments to our carnal appetite be consequent a remediless distempering of our soul; so that what tastes like honey proves gall in the digestion; gripes our bowels, gnaws our heart, and stings our conscience for ever; if present mirth and jollity have a tendency to that dreadful weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth threatned in the Gospel; if for the praise and favour of a few giddy men here we venture eternal shame and confusion before God and Angels and all good men hereafter; if for attaining or preserving a small flock of uncertain riches in this World we shall reduce our selves into a state of most uncomfortable nakedness and penury in the other: 'Tis clear as the Sun that we are downright fools and mad men, if we do not upon these accounts rather willingly reject all these good things, than hazard incurring any of those evils; for, saith truth it self, *What will it profit a man, if he gain the whole World* (ὅς ἐκτιμῶσθῃ τὴν ψυχὴν) *and be endamaged as to his soul, or lose his soul as a mulct.* 'Tis a very disadvantageous bargain, for all the conveniencies this World can afford to be deprived of the comforts of our immortal state. But,

Mark 8. 36.
Luke 9. 25.

Lastly, comparing the evils of this life with the benefits of the future; since the worst tempests of this life will be soon blown over, the bitterest crosses must expire (if not before, however) with our breath; but the good things of the future state are immutable and perpetual; 'tis in evident consequence most reasonable, that we freely (if need be) undertake, and patiently endure these for the sake of those; that in hope of that *incorruptible inheritance, laid up for us in Heaven*, we not only support and comfort our selves; but even rejoyce and exult in all the afflictions by God's wise and just dispensation imposed on us here; as they in *St. Peter*; wherein (saith he) *ye greatly rejoyce* (or exult,) *being for a little while as in heaviness through manifold* * *afflictions or trials.* *Accounting it all joy* (saith *St. James*) *when ye fall into divers temptations* (that is, afflictions or trials) *knowing that the trial of your faith perfecteth patience*; that is, seeing the sufferance of these present evils conduceth to the furtherance of your spiritual and eternal welfare. And, *We glory in tribulation*, saith *St. Paul*; rendring the same account, because it tended to their souls advantage: *St. Paul*, than whom no man perhaps ever more deeply tasted of the cup of affliction; and that tempered with all the most bitter ingredients which this World can produce; Whose life was spent in continual agitation and unsettledness; in all hardships of travel and labour and care; in extreme sufferance of all pains both of body and mind; in all imaginable dangers and difficulties and distresses, that nature exposes man unto, or humane malice can bring upon him; in all wants of natural comfort (food, sleep, shelter, liberty, health) in all kinds of disgrace and contumely; as you may see in those large inventories of his sufferings, registred by himself, in the 6th and 11th

1 Pet. 1. 4.

Ibid.
Ἀγαλλιάσθε
ὀλίγον ἄρτι
* Πειρασμοῖς
Jam. 1. 2.

Rom. 5. 8.

Chapters of his 2d *Epistle* to the *Corinthians*; Yet all this, considering the good things he expected afterward to enjoy, he accounted very slight and tolerable: *For* (saith he) *our lightness of affliction, that is for a little while here, worketh for us a far more exceeding weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen; but at those, which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.* *For we know, that when our earthly house of this tabernacle* (of this unsteady transitory abode) *is dissolved we are to have a tabernacle from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens.* I reckon, saith he again, that is having made a due comparison and computation I find, *that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy* (that is are not considerable, come under no rate or proportion) *in respect of the glory which shall be revealed* (or openly conferred) *upon us.*

2 Cor. 11. 23.
6. 5.

2 Cor. 4. 17.

5. 1.
τὸ ὃ παραινέται
τίκα ἐλαφρὸν
ἢ θλίψεθαι.

Rom. 8. 18.

in respect of the glory which shall be revealed (or openly conferred) *upon us.*

Heb. 10. 34.
Θεαταιζο-
μυσοι
* Αρπαγλυ

Heb. 12. 21

The like opinion had those faithful Christians, in the *Epistle to the Hebrews*, of whom 'tis said, that *being exposed to publick scorn as in the theatre, with reproaches and afflictions, they did with gladness accept the spoiling* * (or rapine) of their goods; knowing that they had in Heaven a better and more induring substance. But the principal example (most obliging our imitation) of this wise choice, is that of our Lord himself; who, in contemplation of the future great satisfaction and reward of patient submission to the divine will, did willingly undergo the greatest of temporal sorrows and ignominies; *Who* (saith the *Apostle to the Hebrews*, propounding his example to us) *for the joy that was set before him, endured the Cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of God.*

Thus immediately, or by an easie inference, doth the consideration of this life's shortness and uncertainty confer to that main part of wisdom, rightly to value the things about which we are conversant; disposing us consequently to moderate our affections, and rightly to guide our actions about them; fitting us therefore for the performance of those duties so often enjoyned us; of not caring for, not trusting in, not minding (unduly that is, and immoderately) things below; of dying to this World, and taking up our cross, or contentedly suffering (in submission to God's will) all loss and inconvenience; as also to the placing our meditation and care, our love and desire, our hope and confidence, our joy and satisfaction, our most earnest pains and endeavours, upon things divine, spiritual and eternal.

Πολυτελέστα-
τον ἀνάλωμα.

Nulla nisi tem-
poris honesta est
avaritia. Sen.

Non enim dat
natura virtu-
tem; ars est bo-
num fieri. Sen.
Ep. 89.

IV. I proceed to another general benefit of that general consideration; which is, that it may engage us to a good improvement of our time; the doing which is a very considerable piece of wisdom. For if time be, (as *Theophrastus* called it truly) *a thing of most precious value* (or expence) as it were a great folly to lavish it away unprofitably; so to be frugal thereof, and careful to lay it out for the best advantage, especially every Man having so little store thereof, must be a special point of Prudence. *To be covetous of time* (*Seneca* tells us) *is a commendable avarice*; it being necessary for the accomplishment of any worthy enterprize; there being nothing excellent, that can soon or easily be effected. Surely he that hath much and great business to dispatch, and but a little time allowed for it, is concerned to husband it well; not to lose it wholly in idleness; not to trifle it away in unnecessary diversions; not to put himself upon other impertinent affairs; above all not to create obstacles to himself, by pursuing matters of a tendency quite contrary to the success of his main undertakings. 'Tis our case; we are obliged here to negotiate in business of infinite price and consequence to us; no less than the salvation of our souls, and eternal happiness; and we see, that our time to drive it on and bring it to a happy issue is very scant and short; short in it self, and very short in respect to the nature of those affairs; the great variety, and the great difficulty of them: The great father of *Physicians* did quicken the students of that faculty to diligence, by admonishing them (in the first place, setting it in the front of his famous *Aphorisms*) that, *life is short, and art is long*. And how much more so is the art of living well (that most excellent and most necessary art; for indeed virtue is not a gift of nature, but a work of art; an effect of labour and study) this, I say, most needful and useful art of living virtuously and piously; this art of spiritual Physick; (of preserving and recovering our souls health) how much longer is it? how many rules are to be learnt? how many precepts to be observed in order thereto? We are bound to furnish our minds with needful knowledge of God's will and our duty; we are to bend our unwilling wills to a ready compliance with them; we are to adorn our souls with dispositions suitable to the future state (such as may qualify us for the presence of God, and conversation with the blessed spirits above) it is incumbent on us to mortify corrupt desires, to restrain inordinate passions, to subdue natural propensities, to extirpate vitious habits; in order to the effecting these things, to use all fit means; devotion toward God, study of his Law, reflection upon our actions, with all such spiritual instruments; the performing which duties, as it doth require great care and pains, so it needs much time; all this is not *dictum factum*, as soon done as said; a few spare minutes will not suffice to accomplish it. Natural inclination, that wild beast within

within us, will not so presently be tamed, and made tractable by us. Ill habits cannot be removed without much exercise and attendance; as they were begot, so they must be destroyed, by a constant succession, and frequency of acts. Fleishly lust is not to be killed with a stab or two; it will fight stoutly, and rebel often, and hold out long, before with our utmost endeavour we can obtain an entire victory over it. No virtue is acquired in an instant, but by degrees, step by step; from the seeds of right instruction and good resolution it springs up, and grows forward by a continual progress of customary practice; 'tis a child of patience, a fruit of perseverance (that *πομονή ἐργε ἀγαθῆ*, *en-* Rom. 2. 7. *during in doing well*, St. Paul speaks of) and consequently a work of time, for enduring implies a good space of time: Having therefore so much to do, and of so great concernment, and so little a portion of time for it, it behoves us to be careful in the improvement of what time is allowed us; to embrace all opportunities and advantages offered; to go the nearest way, to use the best *compendiums* in the transaction of our business; not to be slothful and negligent, but active and intent about it; (for as time is diminished, and in part lost by sloth or slackness; so it is enlarged, and, as it were, multiplied by industry; my day is two in respect of his, who doeth but half my work.) Not (also) to consume our time in fruitless pastimes, and curious entertainments of fancy; being idly busie about impertinences and trifles (we call it sport, but 'tis a serious damage to us;) not to immerse our selves in multiplicities of needless care about secular matters, which may distract us, and bereave us of fit leisure for our great employment; that which our *Saviour* calls *τυβάζεσθαι* Luke 10. 40. *περὶ πολλὰ*, *to keep a great deal of doe and stir* (to be jumbled about as it were, and confounded) *about many things*; and, *περὶ πολλῶν διακονίαν*, *to be distracted and perplexed about much combersome service*; which St. Paul calls *περὶ πολλῶν ἐν τῇ βίᾳ περιεργατείας*, *to be implicated and entangled* (as in a net) 1 Tim. 2. 4. *with the negotiations of this present life*; so that we shall not be expedite, or free to bestir our selves about our more weighty affairs. The spending much time about those things doth steal it from these; yea doth more than so, by discomposing our minds so that we cannot well employ what time remains upon our spiritual concernments. But especially we should not prostitute our time upon vicious projects and practices; doing which is not only a prodigality of the present time, but an abridgment of the future; it not only doth not promote or set forward our business, but brings it backward, and makes us more work than we had before; 'tis a going in a way directly contrary to our journeys-end. The Scripture aptly resembles our life to a wayfaring, a condition of travel and pilgrimage; now he that hath a long journey to make, and but a little time of day to pass it in, must in reason strive to set out soon, and then to make good speed; must proceed on directly, making no stops or deflections (not calling in at every sign that invites him, not standing to gaze at every object seeming new or strange to him; not staying to talk with every Passenger that meets him; but rather avoiding all occasions of diversion and delay) lest he be surpris'd by the night, be left to wander in the dark, be excluded finally from the place whither he tends: So must we in our course towards Heaven and Happiness, take care that we set out soon (procrastinating no time, but beginning instantly to insist in the ways of Piety and Virtue) then proceed on speedily, and persist constantly; no where staying or loitering, thrusting all impediments and avocations from our Progress; lest we never arrive near, or come too late unto the gate of Heaven. St. Peter tells us, that the end of all things doth approach, and thereupon advises us *to be sober, and* 1 Pet. 4. 7. *to watch unto prayer*; for that the less our time is, the more intent and industrious it concerns us to be. And, St. Paul enjoyns us *to redeem the time*, Eph. 5. 15. *because the days are evil*; that is, since we can enjoy no true quiet or comfort here, we should improve our time to the best advantage for the future; he might have also adjoyned, with the Patriarch *Jacob*, the paucity of the days to their badness; because *the days of our life are few and evil*, let us redeem the time; *Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble*: So few Gen. 47. 9. Job 14. 1. indeed they are, that 'tis fit we should lose none of them, but use them all in preparation toward that great change we are to make; that fatal passage out of this strait time into that boundless eternity. So, it seems, we have *Job's* example

Job 14. 14. example of doing: *All the days (says he) of my appointed time will I wait till my change come.* I end this Point with that so comprehensive warning of our Saviour: *Take heed to your selves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. Watch ye therefore and pray that ye may be counted worthy to escape — and to stand before the son of man.*

V. I shall adjoyn but one use more, to which this consideration may be subservient, which is, that it may help to beget and maintain in us (that which is the very heart and soul of all goodness) Sincerity. Sincerity in all kinds, in our thoughts, words and actions. To keep us from harbouring in our breasts such thoughts, as we would be afraid or ashamed to own: from speaking otherwise than we mean, than we intend to do, than we are ready any-where openly to avow; from endeavouring to seem what we are not; from being one thing in our expressions and conversations with men; another in our hearts, or in our closets. From acting with oblique respects to private interests or passions, to humane favour or censure (in matters, I mean, where duty doth intervene, and where pure conscience ought to guide and govern us) from making professions and ostentations (void of substance, of truth, of knowledge, of good purpose) great semblances of peculiar sanctimony, integrity, scrupulosity, spirituality, refinedness, like those *Pharisees* so often therefore taxed in the Gospel; as also from palliating, as those men did, designs of ambition, avarice, envy, animosity, revenge, perverse humour, with pretences of zeal and conscience. We should indeed strive to be good (and that in all real strictness, aiming at utmost perfection) in outward act, and appearance, as well as in heart and reality; for the glory of God and example of men

Rom. 12. 17. (*providing things honest in the sight of all men*) but we must not shine with a false lustre, nor care to seem better than we are, nor intend to serve our selves in seeming to serve God; bartering spiritual commodities for our own glory or gain. For since the day approaches when *God will judge* τα κρυφα ἀνθρώπων, *the things men do so studiously conceal*; when *God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil*; since *we must all appear* (or rather be all made apparent, be manifested and discovered) *at the tribunal of Christ*: since *there is nothing covered, which shall not be revealed, nor hid that shall not be known*; so that whatever is spoken in the ear in closets, shall be proclaimed on the house tops: Since at length, and that within a very short time (no man knows how soon) the whispers of every mouth (the closest murmurs of detraction, slander and sycophantry) shall become audible to every ear; the abstrusest thoughts of all hearts (the closest malice and envy) shall be disclosed in the most publick Theatre before innumerable spectators; the truth of all pretences shall be thoroughly examined; the just merit of every person, and every cause shall with a most exact scrutiny be scann'd openly in the face of all the World; to what purpose can it be to juggle or baffle for a time; for a few days (perhaps for a few minutes) to abuse, or to amuse those about us with crafty dissimulation or deceit? Is it worth the pains to devise plausible shifts, which shall instantly, we know, be detected and defeated; to bedaub foul designs with a fair varnish, which death will presently wipe off; to be dark and cloudy in our proceedings, when a clear day (that will certainly dispel all darkness and scatter all mists) is breaking in upon us; to make vizors for our faces, and cloaks for our actions, when we must very shortly be exposed, perfectly naked and undisguised, in our true colours, to the general view of Angels and Men? Heaven sees at present what we think and do, and our conscience cannot be wholly ignorant or insensible; nor can Earth it self be long unacquainted therewith. Is it not much better, and more easie (since it requires no pains or study) to act our selves, than to accommodate our selves to other unbeseeming and undue parts; to be upright in our intentions, consistent in our discourses, plain in our dealings, following the single and uniform guidance of our reason and conscience, than to shuffle and shift, wandring after the various, uncertain and inconstant opinions or humours of men? What matter is it, what cloaths we wear, what garb we appear in, during this posture of travel and sojourning here; what for the present we go for; how men esteem us, what they think of our actions? St.

Paul

Paul at least did not much stand upon it; for *with me*, said he, 'tis a very 1 Cor. 4. 3. small thing (ἐλάχισον, the least thing that can come under consideration) to be judged of you; or of humane day (that is, of this present transitory, fallible, reverfible judgment of men.) If we mean well and do righteously our conscience will at present satisfy us, and the divine (unerring and impartial) sentence will hereafter acquit us; no unjust or uncharitable censure shall prejudice us; if we entertain base designs, and deal unrighteously, as our conscience will accuse and vex us here, so God will shortly condemn and punish us; neither shall the most favourable conceit of men stand us in stead. 1 Cor. 3. 13. Every man's work shall become manifest; for the day shall declare it; because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire (that is, a severe and strict inquiry) shall try every man's work, of what sort it is. I cannot insist more on this Point; I shall only say, that considering the brevity and uncertainty of our present state, the greatest simplicity may justly be deemed the truest wisdom; that who deceives others doth cozen himself most; that the deepest policy (used to compass, or to conceal bad designs) will in the end appear the most downright folly.

I might add to the precedent discourses, that *Philosophy* it self hath commended this consideration as a proper and powerful instrument of virtue; reckoning the practice thereof a main part of wisdom; the greatest proficient therein in common esteem, *Socrates*, having defined Philosophy (or the study of wisdom) to be nothing else, but (μαλὲν θανάτου) *the study of death*; intimating also (in *Plato's Phædon*) that this study, the meditation of death and preparation of his mind to leave this World, had been the constant and chief employment of his life. That likewise, according to experience, nothing more avails to render the minds of men sober and well composed, than such spectacles of Mortality, as do impress this consideration upon them. For whom doth not the sight of a Coffin or of a Grave gaping to receive a friend perhaps, or an ancient Acquaintance; however a man in nature and state altogether like our selves; of the mournful looks and habits, of all the sad pomps and solemnities attending man unto his long home, by minding him of his own frail condition, affect with some serious, some honest, some wise thoughts? And if we be reasonable men we may every day supply the need of such occasions, by representing to our selves the necessity of our soon returning to the dust; dressing in thought our own Herfes, and celebrating our own Funerals; by living under the continual apprehension and sense of our transitory and uncertain condition; dying daily, or becoming already dead unto this World. The doing which effectually being the gift of God, and an especial work of his Grace, let us of him humbly implore it, saying after the Holy Prophet, *Lord, so teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.* Amen.

Τὸτο ἔχει ἡ
τελευτῆς τῆς
ἡδονῆς τὸ πᾶ-
σαν ἡμέραν ὡς
τελευταίαν
διεξάγειν.
Anton. lib. 7.

SERMON XVI.

The Danger and Mischief of delaying Repentance.

P S A L. cxix. 60.

I made haste, and delayed not to keep thy Commandments.

THIS Psalm (no less excellent in virtue, than large in bulk) containeth manifold reflections upon the nature, the properties, the adjuncts and effects of God's Law; many sprightly ejaculations about it (conceived in different forms of speech; some in way of petition, some of thanksgiving, some of resolution, some of assertion or aphorism) many useful directions, many zealous exhortations to the observance of it; the which are not ranged in any strict order, but (like a variety of fair flowers and wholesome herbs in a wide field) do with a grateful confusion lie dispersed, as they freely did spring up in the heart, or were suggested by the devout spirit of him, who indited the *Psalm*; whence no coherence of sentences being designed, we may consider any one of them absolutely or singly by it self.

Among them, that which I have picked out for the subject of my discourse, implieth an excellent rule of practice, authorised by the *Psalmist's* example; it is propounded in way of devotion or immediate address to God; unto whose infallible knowledge his conscience maketh an appeal concerning his practice; not as boasting thereof, but as praising God for it, unto whose gracious instruction and succour he frequently doth ascribe all his performances: But the manner of propounding I shall not insist upon; the rule it self is, that speedily, without any procrastination or delay, we should apply our selves to the observance of God's Commandments; the practice of which rule it shall be my endeavour to recommend and press.

It is a common practice of men, that are engaged in bad courses, which their own conscience discerneth and disapproveth, to adjourn the reformation of their lives to a farther time, so indulging themselves in the present commission of sin, that yet they would seem to purpose, and promise themselves here-

Recognosce singulos, considera universos, nullus non vicia spectat in crastinum; non enim vivunt, sed victuri sunt. Sen. Ep. 45.

Victuros agimus semper, nec vivimus unquam. Manil. 4.

Prov. 6. 10.

Plut. in Pelop.

Non est crede mihi sapientis dicere, vivam. Mart. 1. 16.

after to repent and take up: Few resolve to persist finally in an evil way, or despair of being one day reclaimed; but immediately and effectually to set upon it, many deem unseasonable or needless; it will, they presume, be soon enough to begin to morrow or next day, a month or a year hence, when they shall find more commodious opportunity, or shall prove better disposed thereto; in the mean time with *Solomon's* sluggard, *Let say they, a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands*; let us but neglect this duty, let us but satisfy this appetite, let us but enjoy this bout of pleasure; hereafter, God willing, we mean to be more careful; we hope that we shall become more sober: So like bad debtors; when our conscience dunneeth us, we always mean, we always promise to pay; if she will stay a while, she shall, we tell her, be satisfied; or like vain spendthrifts, we see our estate fly, yet presume that it will hold out, and at length we shall reserve enough for our use. *Eis ἀσχετον τὰ σπασαῖα, Let serious business stay till the morrow*, was a saying that cost dear to him who said it; yet we in our greatest concerns follow him.

But how fallacious, how dangerous and how mischievous this manner of proceeding is; how much better and more adviseable it is, after the example propounded in our Text, speedily to betake our selves unto the discharge of our debt and duty to God, the following considerations will plainly declare.

I. We

1. We may consider, that the observance of God's Commandments (an observance of them proceeding from an habitual disposition of mind, in a constant tenour of practice) is our indispensable duty, our main concernment, our only way to happiness; the necessary condition of our attaining salvation; that alone which can procure God's love and favour toward us; that unto which all real blessings here, and all bliss hereafter are inseparably annexed: *Fear God* Eccl. 12. 13. *and keep his Commandments, for this is the whole of man;* (the whole duty, the whole design, the whole perfection, the sum of our wisdom, and our happiness.) *If thou wilt enter into life, keep the Commandments: The righteous* Matt. 19. 27. *Lord loveth righteousness, his countenance doth behold the upright; God will* Psal. 11. 7. *render to every man according to his works;* these are Oracles indubitably clear, Prov. 15. 9. and infallibly certain; these are immoveable terms of justice between God and Man, (which never will, never can be relaxed; being grounded on the immutable nature of God, and eternal reason of things; if God had not decreed, Matt. 5. 18. if he had not said these things, they would not assuredly be true; for it is a Luke 16. 17. foul contradiction to reason, that a Man ever should please God without obeying him; 'tis a gross absurdity in nature, that a Man should be happy without being good; wherefore all the wit in the World cannot devise a way, all the authority upon Earth (yea, I dare say, even in Heaven itself) cannot establish a condition, beside faithful observance of God's Law, that can save, or make us happy; from it there can be no valid dispensation, without it there can be no effectual absolution, for it there can be no acceptable commutation; nor in defect thereof will any faith, any profession, any trick or pretence whatever avail, or signify any thing: Whatever expedient to supply its room superstition, mistake, craft, or presumption may recommend, we shall, relying thereon, be certainly deluded: If therefore we mean to be saved (and are we so wild as not to mean it?) if we do not renounce felicity (and do we not then renounce our wits?) to become virtuous, to proceed in a course of obedience, is a work that necessarily must be performed; and why then should we not instantly undertake it; wherefore do we demur or stick at it; how can we at all rest quiet, while an affair of so vast importance lieth upon our hands, or until our mind be freed of all uncertainty and suspense about it? Were a probable way suggested to us of acquiring great wealth, honour or pleasure, should we not quickly run about it, could we contentedly sleep, till we had brought the business to a sure or hopeless issue? and why with less expedition or urgency should we pursue the certain means of our present security and comfort, of our final salvation and happiness? in doing so, are we not strangely inconsistent with our selves?

Again, disobedience is the certain road to perdition; that which involveth us in guilt and condemnation, that which provoketh God's wrath and hatred against us, that which assuredly will throw us into a state of eternal sorrow and wretchedness: *The foolish shall not stand in God's sight, he hateth all the workers* Psal. 5. 5. *of iniquity; If ye do not repent, ye shall perish. The wicked shall be turned in-* Luke 13. 3. *to Hell, and all the people that forget God; The unrighteous shall not inherit the* Psal. 9. 17. *Kingdom of God; The wicked shall go into everlasting punishment;* these are denunciations no less sure than severe, from that mouth, which is never opened 1 Cor. 6. 9. in vain; from the execution whereof there can be no shelter or refuge; And Matt. 25. 46. what wise man, what man in his right senses, would for one minute stand obnoxious to them? Who that any wise tendereth his own welfare would move one step forward in so perillous and destructive a course? the farther in which he proceedeth, the more he discomfeth from happiness, the nearer he approacheth to ruin.

In other cases common sense prompteth men to proceed otherwise; for who having rendred one his enemy, that far overmatcheth him, and at whose mercy he standeth, will not instantly sue to be reconciled? who being seised by a pernicious disease, will not haste to seek a cure? who being fallen into the jaws of a terrible danger, will not nimbly leap out thence? and such plainly is our case; while we persist in sin, we live in enmity and defiance with the Almighty, who can at his Pleasure crush us; we lie under a fatal plague, which, if we do not seasonably repent, will certainly destroy us; we incur the most dreadful of all hazards, abiding in the confines of death and destruction; God frowning at us, guilt holding us, Hell gaping for us: Every Sinner is (according to

Prov. 23. 34. the *Wise man's* expression) *as he that lieth down in the midst of the sea, or as he that lieth upon the top of a mast*; and he that is in such a case, is he not mad or senseless, if he will not forthwith labour to swim out thence, or make all speed to get down into a safer place? can any man with comfort lodge in a condition so dismally ticklish?

2. We may consider, that in order to our final welfare we have much work to dispatch, the which requireth as earnest care and painful industry, so a competent long time; which, if we do not presently fall on, may be wanting, and thence our work be left undone, or imperfect: To conquer and correct bad inclinations, to render our sensual appetites obsequious to reason, to compose our passions into a right and steady order, to cleanse our souls from vanity, from perverseness, from sloth, from all vicious distempers, and in their room to implant firm habits of virtue; to get a clear knowledge of our duty, with a ready disposition to perform it; in fine, to season our minds with holy affections, qualifying us for the presence of God, and conversation with the blessed Spirits above; these are things that must be done, but cannot be done in a trice; it is not *dictum factum*, as soon done as said; but *πομονὴ ἐργῶν ἀγαθῶν*, a *patient continuance in well-doing* is needful to achieve it; for it no time can be redundant, the longest life can hardly be sufficient: *Art is long, and life is short*, may be an Aphorism in *Divinity* as well as in *Physick*; the art of living, well, of preserving our Soul's health, and curing its distempers, requireth no less time to compass it, than any other Art or Science.

οὐ καὶ ἀδιδάσκον ἡμῖν χορηγεῖ βοήθειαν ὁ Θεός, ἀλλὰ πορεύοις. Chryl. ad Eph. λόγ. κα.
 Virtue is not a Mushrome, that springeth up of it self in one Night, when we are asleep or regard it not: But a delicate Plant, that groweth slowly and tenderly, needing much pains to cultivate it, much care to guard it, much time to mature it, in our untoward soil, in this World's unkindly weather; happiness is a thing too precious to be purchased at an easie rate; Heaven is too high to be come at without much climbing; the crown of bliss is a Prize too noble to be won without a long and tough conflict. Neither is Vice a spirit, that will be conjured down by a charm, or with a *Presto* driven away; it is not an adversary, that can be knocked down at a blow, or dispatched with a stab. Whosoever shall pretend at any time easily with a celerity, by a kind of *Le-gerdemain*, or by any misterious knack, a Man may be settled in virtue, or converted from vice, common experience abundantly will confute him; which sheweth, that a habit otherwise (setting miracles aside) cannot be produced or destroyed, than by a constant exercise of acts sutable or opposite thereto; and that such acts cannot be exercised without voiding all impediments and framing all principles of action (such as temper of body, judgment of mind, influence of custom) to a compliance; that who by temper is peevish or chole-ric, cannot without mastering that temper become patient or meek: that who from vain opinions is proud, cannot without considering away these opinions prove humble; that who by custom is grown intemperate, cannot without weaning himself from that custom come to be sober; that who from the concurrence of a sorry nature, fond conceits, mean breeding and scurvy usage is covetous; cannot without draining all those sources of his fault, be turned into liberal. The change of our mind is one of the greatest alterations in nature, which cannot be compassed in any way, or within any time we please; but it must proceed on leisurely and regularly, in such order, by such steps, as the nature of things doth permit; it must be wrought by a resolute and laborious perseverance, by a watchful application of mind in voiding Prejudices, in waiting for advantages, in attending to all we do; by forcible wresting our nature from its bent, and swimming against the current of impetuous desires; by a patient disentangling our selves from practices most agreeable and familiar to us; by a weary fencing with temptations, by long struggling with manifold oppositions and difficulties; whence the Holy Scripture termeth our practice a warfare, wherein we are to fight many a bloody battel with most redoubtable foes; a combat, which must be managed with our best skill, and utmost might; a race, which we must pass through with incessant activity and swiftness.

If therefore we mean to be good or to be happy, it behoveth us to lose no time; to be presently up at our great task; to snatch all occasions, to embrace all means incident of reforming our hearts and lives. As those, who have

a long journey to go, do take care to set out early, and in their way make good speed, lest the night overtake them before they reach their home; so it being a great way from hence to Heaven, seeing we must pass over so many obstacles, through so many Paths of duty before we arrive thither, it is expedient to set forward as soon as can be, and to proceed with all expedition; the longer we stay, the more time we shall need, and the less we shall have

Ἄλλ' ἄγε νῦν ἵομεν, δὴ γὰρ μέμλωκε
μάλιστα ἡμᾶρ, ἀτὰρ τάχα τοι ποτὶ
ἑσπερα ῥίγιον ἔσαι. Hom. Od. ο.

3. We may consider, that no future time which we can fix upon will be more convenient than the present is for our reformation. Let us pitch on what time we please, we shall be as unwilling and unfit to begin as we are now; we shall find in our selves the same indispositions, the same averseness, or the same listlessness toward it as now: There will occur the like hardships to deter us, and the like Pleasures to allure us from our duty; objects will then be as present and will strike as smartly upon our senses; the case will appear just the same, and the same Pretences for delay will obtrude themselves; so that we shall be as apt then as now to prorogue the business. We shall say then, to morrow I will mend; and when that morrow cometh, it will be still to morrow, and so the morrow will prove endless. If like the simple Rustick, (who stay'd by the River side waiting till it had done running, that so he might pass dry-foot over the chanel) we do conceit, that the sources of sin (bad inclinations within, and strong temptations abroad) will of themselves be spent or fail, we shall find our selves deluded. If ever we come to take up, we must have a beginning with some difficulty and trouble; we must courageously break through the present with all its enchantments; we must undauntedly plunge into the cold stream; we must rouse our selves from our bed of sloth; we must shake off that brutish improvidence which detaineth us, and why should we not essay it now? there is the same reason now that ever we can have; yea, far more reason now; for if that we now begin, hereafter at any determinate time, some of the work will be done, what remaineth will be shorter and easier to us. Nay farther,

Cras hoc fiet; idem cras fiet &c.

Pict. Sat. 5.

Qui non est hodie, cras minus aptus erit.
Ovid. de Rom. l. Epict. 4. 12.

— qui recte vivendi prorogat horam,
Rusticus expectat dum defluat amnis, at ille
Labitur, & labetur in omne volubilis ævum.
Hor. Ep. l. 2.

Εἰ μὲν λυσιτελής ἡ ὑπέρδεσις ἐστὶν ἢ
παντελής ἀπόστασις αὐτῆς ὅτι λυσιτελής
ἔσται. Epict. 4. 12.

For the same reason we put it off, we
should put it away: If it be good at all,
it is good at present.

4. We may consider, that the more we defer, the more difficult and painful our work must needs prove; every day will both enlarge our task, and diminish our ability to perform it: Sin is never at a stay; if we do not retreat from it, we shall advance in it; and the farther on we go, the more we have to come back; every step we take forward, (even before we can return hither, into the state wherein we are at present) must be repeated; all the web we spin must be unravelled; we must vomit up all we take in; which to do we shall find very tedious and grievous.

Παρά τὸ
σήμερον ἀ-
μαρτ. ὅν εἰς
τάλλα χεῖ-
ρον ἀνάγκη σοι
τὰ περὶ ματα.
ἔσται. Epict.
4. 12.

Vice as it groweth in age, so it improveth in stature and strength; from a puny Child it soon waxeth a lusty Stripling, then riseth to be a sturdy Man, and after a-while becometh a massy Giant, whom we shall scarce dare to encounter, whom we shall be very hardly able to vanquish; especially seeing that as it groweth taller and stouter, so we shall dwindle and prove more impotent; for it feedeth upon our vitals, and thriveth by our decay; it waxeth mighty by stripping us of our best forces; by enfeebling our reason, by perverting our will, by corrupting our temper, by debasing our courage, by seducing all our appetites and passions to a treacherous compliance with it self; every day our mind groweth more blind, our will more resty, our spirit more faint, our appetites more fierce, our passions more headstrong and untameable; The power and empire of sin do strangely by degrees encroach, and continually get ground upon us, till it hath quite subdued and enthralled us; first we learn to bear it, then we come to like it, by and by we contract a friendship with it, then we dote upon it, at last we become enslaved to it in a bondage, which we shall hardly be able, or willing to shake off; when not only our necks are fitted to the yoke, our hands are manacled, and our feet shackled thereby; but our heads and hearts do conspire in a base submission thereto: When vice hath made such im-

*Falsis opinionibus tanto quisque inferitur,
quanto magis in eis, familiarisque voluntatur.*
Aug. Ep. 17.

pression on us, when this pernicious weed hath taken so deep root in our mind, will and affection, it will demand an extremely toilsome labour to extirpate it.

Indeed by continuance in sin, the chief means (afforded by nature, or by grace) of restraining, or reducing us from it, are either cut off, or enervated and rendred ineffectual.

Natural modesty, while it lasteth, is a curb from doing ill; Men in their first deflexions from virtue are bashful and shy; out of regard to other Mens opinion, and tenderness of their own honour, they are afraid or ashamed to transgress plain rules of duty; but in process this disposition weareth out; by little and little they arrive to that character

Μέγιστον πρὸς ἀρετὴν βοήθημα ἡ αἰδώς, Greg. Naz. Or. 26.

nam quis Peccandi finem posuit sibi, quando recepit Ejectum semel attrita de fronte ruborem. Juv. Sat. 18.

Ezek. 2. 4. of the degenerate Jews, whom the Prophets call *impudent children*, having a brow
3. 7. of brass, and faces harder than a rock; so that they commit sin with open face,
Isa. 48. 4. and in broad day, without any mask, without a blush; they despise their own repu-
Jer. 5. 3. tation, and defy all censure of others; they outface and outbrave the World,
Prov. 21. 29. till at length with prodigious insolence they come to boast of wickedness and
Phil. 3. 19. glory in their shame, as an instance of high courage, and special gallantry.

Conscience is a check to beginners in sin, reclaiming them from it, and rating them for it; but this in long standers becometh useless, either failing to

discharge its office, or assaying it to no purpose; having often been slighted, it will be weary of chiding; or if it be not wholly dumb, we shall be deaf to its reproof: As those who live by cataracts or downfalls of Water are by continual noise so deafened as not to hear or mind it, so shall

Ψυχὴ ἀπὸ τῆς ἀμαρτίας γενομένη καὶ ἀναλγητὸς διατεθεῖσα πολλῶν παρὰ τοῦ νοσήματι τῷ περὶ ἡμῶν, &c. Chrys. Tom. Orat. 64.

we in time grow senseless, not regarding the loudest Peals and Ratlings of our conscience.

(Ezek. 2. 4. The Heart of a raw Novice in impiety is somewhat tender and soft, so that
3. 7. remorse can pierce and sting it; his neck is yielding and sensible, so that the
Neh. 9. 29. yoke of sin doth gall it; but in stout Proficients the heart becometh hard and
2 Chron. 36. stony, the neck stiff and brawny; (*an iron sinew*, as the Prophet termeth it)
Dan. 5. 20. so that they do not feel or resent any thing; but are like those of whom St.
Isa. 48. 4. Paul speaketh; οἱ τινες ἀπειληγνότες, who being past feeling all sorrow or smart,
Quo quis pejus se habet, minus sentit. Sen. Ep. have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with gree-
53. Eph. 4. 19. diness.

When first we nibble at the Bait, or enter into bad courses, our reason doth contest and remonstrate against it, faithfully representing to us the folly, the ugliness, the baseness, the manifold ill consequences of sinning; but that by continuance is muffled so as not to discern, or muzzled so as not to declare; yea, often is so debauched as to excuse, to avow and maintain, yea, to applaud and extol our miscarriages.

For a time a man retaineth some courage, and a hope that he may repent; but progress in sin dispiriteth and casteth into despair; whether God be placable, whether himself be corrigible; an apprehension concerning the length of the way, or the difficulty of the work discourageth, and despondency rendreth him heartless and careless to attempt it. There is no Man that hath heard of God, who hath not at first some dread of offending him, and some dissatisfaction in transgressing his will; it appearing to his mind (not yet utterly blinded and depraved) a desperate thing to brave his irresistible Power, an absurd thing to thwart his infallible Wisdom, a detestable thing to abuse his immense Goodness; but obstinacy in sin doth quash this conscientious awe; so that at length
Psal. 10. 4. God is not in all his thoughts, the fear of God is not before his eyes; The Wrath,
36. 1. of the Almighty seemeth a Bugbear, the fiercest menaces of Religion sound but as Rattles to him.

As for the gentle Whispers and Touches of Divine Grace, the monitory Dispensations of Providence, the good advices and wholesome reproofs of Friends, with the like means of reclaiming sinners; these to Persons settled on their lees, or fixed in bad custome, are but as gusts of Wind brushing an old Oak, or as Waves dashing on a Rock, without at all shaking or stirring it.

Now when any Person is come to this pass, it must be hugely difficult to reduce him; to retrieve a defloured Modesty, to quicken a jaded Conscience, to supple a callous Heart, to resettlement a baffled Reason, to rear a dejected Courage,

to recover a Soul miserably benumbed and broken, to its former vigour and integrity; can be no easie matter.

The diseases of our Soul no less than those of our Body, when once they are inveterate, they are become more incurable; the longer we forbear to apply due remedy, the more hard their cure will prove; if we let them proceed far, we must, e'er we can be rid of them, undergo a course of Physick very tedious and offensive to us; many a rough Purge, many a fore Phlebotomy, many an irksome sweat we must endure. Yea farther,

—frustra medicina paratur,
Cum mala per longas invaluere moras. Ovid.

Ῥᾶν ἀπ' ἀρχῆς μὴ ἐμδύσαι κακία,
ἣ περὶ ὅσον διαφύγειν, ἢ περιβαίνον
ἀκούσαι. Greg. Naz. Orat. 26.

5. We may consider, that by delaying to amend, to do it may become quite impossible; it may be so in the nature of the thing, it may be so by the will of God: The thing may become naturally impossible; for vice by custom may pass into nature, and prove so congenial, as if it were born with us; so that we shall propend to it as a stone falleth down, or as a spark flieth upward: By soaking in Voluptuousness we may be so transformed into Brutes, by sleeping in malice so converted into Fiends, that we necessarily shall act like creatures of that kind, into which we are degenerated; and then in no-wise without a downright Miracle are we capable of being reformed. *How long,*

Ἐπειδὴν εἰς φρενίτην ἐκπεσόντες λακ-
τίσωσι καὶ δάκνωσι τὰς ἐντολίμους ἀπαλ-
λάξαι τ' ἀρρώστιας αὐτῶν, τότε νοσήσιν
ἀνίατα. Chrys. in Babyl. Orat. 2.

Solomon, wilt thou sleep, O Sluggard, when wilt thou arise out of thy sleep? Prov. 6. 9.

We may be so often called on, and 'tis not easie to awaken us, when we are got

into a spiritual slumber; but when we are *dead in trespasses and sins*, so that all breath of holy affection is stopt, and no spiritual pulse from our heart doth ap-

Eph. 2. 1.
Apoc. 3. 1.
1 Tim. 5. 6.

pear; that all sense of duty is lost, all appetite to good doth fail, no strength or activity to move in a good course doth exert it self, that our good complexion is dissolved, and all our finer spirits are dissipated, that our mind is quite cra-

zed, and all its Powers are shattered or spoiled; when thus, I say, we are spi-ritually dead, how can we raise our selves, what beneath omnipotency can ef-

Frangas citius
quam corrigas
quia in praviū
induruerunt.

fect it? as a stick, when once 'tis dry and stiff, you may break it, but you can never bend it into a streighter posture, so doth the Man become incorrigible, who is settled and stiffened in vice. The stain of habitual sin may sink in so deep,

Quintil. 1. 3.
Jer. 13. 23.

and so thoroughly tincture all our Soul, that we may be like those People, of whom the Prophet saith, *Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the Leopard his spots? then may ye do good, that are accustomed to do evil:* Such an impossibility may arise from nature; one greater and more insuperable may come from God.

To an effectual repentance the succour of divine grace is necessary; but that is arbitrarily dispensed; *the spirit bloweth where it listeth* yet it listeth wisely, John 3. 8.

with regard both to the past behaviour, and present capacities of Men; so that to such who have abused it, and to such who will not treat it well, it shall not be imparted: And can we be well assured, can we reasonably hope, that after we by our presumptuous delays have put off God and dallied with his grace; after that he long in vain hath *waited to be gracious*; after that he hath endured so many neglects, and so many repulses from us; after that we frequently have slighted his open invitations, and smothered his kindly motions in us; in short, after we so unworthily have misused his goodness and patience, that he farther will vouchsafe his grace to us? when we have forfeited it, when we have re-

τὸ πνεῦμα δ'
χρθεῖται;

jected it, when we have spurned and driven it away, can we hope to recover it? There is a time, a season, a day allotted to us; *our day* it is termed, *a day*

Heb. 10. 29
Ἀδύνατον.

of salvation, the season of our visitation, an acceptable time; wherein God freely doth exhibit grace, and presenteth his mercy to us; if we let this day slip,

Heb. 6. 4.
Luke 19. 42.

the night cometh when no man can work; when *the things belonging to our peace*

44.
2 Cor. 6. 21
Heb. 3. 13.

will be hidden from our eyes; when (as the Prophet expresseth it) we shall grope for the wall like the blind, and stumble at noon day as in the night, and be in de-

John. 9. 4.
Luke 19. 42.
Isa. 59. 10.

solate places as dead men; after that day is spent, and that comfortable light is set, a dismal night of darkness, of cold, of disconsolateness will succeed; when

Jer. 15. 6.
Mal. 2. 17.

God being weary of bearing with Men doth utterly desert them, and delivereth them over to a reprobate mind; when subtracting his gracious direction and assistance, he giveth them over to their own hearts lusts, and to walk in their own

Rom. 1. 24.
26. 28.
Psal. 81. 12.
Isa. 63. 17.

why

Rom. 9. 17. *why hast thou made us to err from thy ways, and hardened our heart from thy fear? when like Pharaoh they survive only as objects of God's justice, or occasions to glorify his power; when like Esau, they cannot find a place of repentance, although they seek it carefully with tears; when as to the foolish loitering Virgins, the door of mercy is shut upon them; when the master of the house doth rise and shut the door, &c. when that menace of divine wisdom cometh to be executed; They shall call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early but they shall not find me; for that they hated knowledge, and did not chuse the fear of the Lord: And if neglecting our season, and present means, we once fall into this state, then is our case most deplorable; we are dead Men irreversibly doomed, and only for a few moments reprieved from the stroke of final vengeance; we are vessels of wrath fitted (or made up) for destruction; by a fatal blindness and obduration sealed up to ruin; we are like the terra damnata, that earth (in the Apostle,) which drinking up the rain, that cometh oft upon it, and bearing thorns and briars, is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing, and whose end is to be burned Wherefore according to the advice of the Prophet, Seek ye the Lord, when he may be found, call ye upon him, while he is near.*

Rom. 9. 22. *It is true, that God is ever ready upon our true conversion to receive us into favour, that his arms are always open to embrace a sincere Penitent; that he hath declared, whenever a wicked man turneth from his wickedness, and doeth that which is right, he shall save his soul alive; that if we do wash our selves, make us clean, put away the evil of our doings, and cease to do evil, then although our sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow, though they be like crimson they shall be as wool; that if we rend our hearts, and turn unto the Lord, he is gracious and merciful, and will repent of the evil; that God is good and ready to forgive, and plenteous in mercy unto all that call upon him; that whenever a prodigal son with humble confession and hearty contrition for his sin doth arise and go to his father, he will embrace him tenderly, and entertain him kindly; that even a profane Apostate, and a bloody Oppressor (as Manasses) a lewd Strumpet (as Magdalene) a notable Thief (as he upon the Cross) a timorous Renouncer (as St. Peter) a furious Persecutor (as St. Paul) a stupid Idolater (as all the Heathen World, when the Gospel came to them, was) the most heinous Sinner that ever hath been, or can be imagined to be, if he be disposed to repent, is capable of mercy; those declarations and promises are infallibly true, those instances peremptorily do evince, that repentance is never superannuated; that if we can turn at all, we shall not turn too late; that *pœnitentia nunquam sera, modo seria*, is an irrefragable rule; yet nevertheless delay is very unsafe; for what assurance can we have, that God hereafter will enable us to perform those conditions of bewailing our sins, and forsaking them? have we not cause rather to fear that he will chastise our presumption by with-holding his Grace? for although God faileth not to yield competent aids to Persons who have not despised his goodness and long-suffering that leadeth them to repentance; yet he that wilfully or wantonly loitereth away the time, and squandereth the means allowed him; who refuseth to come when God calleth, yea woeth and courteth him to repentance, how can he pretend to find such favour?*

We might add, that supposing God in superabundance of mercy might be presumed never to with-hold his grace; yet seeing his grace doth not work by irresistible compulsion; seeing the worse qualified we are, the more apt we shall be to cross and defeat its operation; seeing that we cannot hope that hereafter we shall be more fit than now to comply with it: Yea seeing we may be sure, that after our hearts are hardened by perseverance in sin, we shall be more indisposed thereto; we by delay of repentance do not only venture the forfeiture of divine grace, but the danger of abusing it, which heinously will aggravate our guilt, and hugely augment our punishment.

We should do well therefore most seriously to regard the Apostle's admonition; *Exhort one another to day, while it is called to day, lest any of you be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin:* Now that we find our selves invited to repent, now that we apprehend so much reason for it; now that we feel our hearts somewhat enclined thereto; now that we have time in our hands, and are not barr'd from hopes of mercy; now that it is not extremely difficult, or not absolutely

solutely impossible, let us in God's name lay hold on the occasion, let us speedily and earnestly set upon the work. Farther yet,

6. We should consider, that we are mortal and frail, and thence any designs of future reformation may be clipt off, or intercepted by death; which is always creeping toward us, and may for all we can tell be very near at hand. You say you will repent to morrow; but are you sure you shall have a morrow to repent in? have you an hour in your hand, or one minute at your disposal? have you a lease to shew for any term of life; can you claim or reckon upon the least portion of time without his leave, who bestoweth life, and dealeth out time, and ordereth all things as he pleaseth? Can you any wise descry

Qui poenitentiam veniam spondit, peccanti crastinum diem non promittit. Greg. in Evang. Hom. IX.

the just *measure of your days*; or the *bounds of your appointed time*, without a special revelation from him, *in whose hands is your breath*; and *with whom alone the number of your months is registred*? Boast not thy self of to morrow, for *thou knowest not what a day may bring forth*, saith the *Wise-man*: boast not of it, that is, do not pretend it to be at thy disposal, presume not upon any thing that may befall therein; for whilst thou presumest thereon, may it not be said unto thee, as to the rich Projectour in the Gospel, * *Thou fool, this night shall thy soul be required of thee*. Doth not, secluding hidden decrees, every Man's life hang upon a thread very slender and frail? is it not subject to many diseases lurking within, and to a thousand accidents flying about us? how many, that might have promised themselves as fair scope as we can, have been unexpectedly snapt away? How many have been cropt in the flower of their age and vigour of their strength? Doth not every day present experiments of sudden death? Do we not continually see that observation of the *Preacher* verified, *Man knoweth not his time; as the fishes that are taken in an evil net, and as the birds are caught in the snare, so are the sons of men snared in an evil time, when it cometh suddenly upon them*?

Old men are ready to drop of themselves, and young men are easily brushed or shaken down; the former visibly stand upon the brink of Eternity, the latter walk upon a bottomless Quag, into which unawares they may slump; who then can anywise be secure? We are all therefore highly concerned to use our life, while we have it; to catch the first opportunity, lest all opportunity forsake us; to cut off our sinning, lest our selves be cut off before it: And that the rather, because by lavishing, or misemploying our present time, we may lose the future, provoking God to bereave us of it; for as prolongation of time is a reward of Piety; as to observance of the Commandments it is promised, *Length*

Τι γὰρ οἶδας ἀνθρώπε ἀμαρτήσας, εἰ ἡμέρας ζήσεις ἐν τῷδε τῷ βίῳ, ἵνα καὶ μετανοήσῃς, ἔτι.
* *Ὅτι ἀδελφὲ ἡ ἐξοδὸς σου ἐκ τῆς βίης ὑπαρχεί, καὶ ἐν ἀμαρτίᾳ τελειότησαντι μετάνοια ἐκ ἔσας, ἔτι.* Const. Ap. 2. 12.

of days, and long life, and peace shall be added unto thee; so being immaturally snatched hence is the punishment awarded to impious practice; so it is threatned that *Evilmen shall be cut off*; that *bloody and deceitful men shall not live out half their days*; that *God will wound the head of his enemies, and the hairy scalp of such an one as goeth on still in his wickedness*: the very being unmindful of their duty is the cause, why men are thus surpris'd; for, *If*, saith God, *thou dost not watch, I shall come upon thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know when I come upon thee*. And *If* (saith our Lord) *that servant doth say in his heart, my Lord delayeth his coming, &c. The Lord of that servant will come in a day, when he looketh not for him, &c.*

If then it be certain, that we must render a strict account of all our doings here; if by reason of our frail nature and slippery state, it be uncertain when we shall be summoned thereto; if our negligence may abridge and accelerate the term, is it not very reasonable to observe those advices of our Lord; *Watch*, for ye do not know the day, nor the hour, when the son of man cometh; *Take heed to your selves, lest at any time your heart be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and cares of this life; and so that day come upon you unawares*. Let your loins be girded about, and your lamps burning, and ye your selves like men that wait for your Lord: And to take the counsel of the *Wise-man*, *Make no tarrying to turn unto the Lord, and put not off from day to day; for suddenly shall the wrath of the Lord come forth, and in thy security shalt thou be destroyed, and perish in the day of vengeance*.

These

These considerations plainly do shew how very foolish, how extremely dangerous and destructive the procrastinating our reformation of life is: there are some others of good moment, which we shall reserve.

S E R M O N . XVII.

The Danger and Mischief of delaying Repentance.

P S A L. cxix. 60.

I made haste, and delayed not to keep thy Commandments.

I Proceed to the Considerations which yet remain to be spoken to.

1. We may consider the causes of delay in this case (as in all cases of moment) to be bad and unworthy of a Man: What can they be but either stupidity, that we do not apprehend the importance of the affair; or improvidence, that we do not attend to the danger of persisting in sin; or negligence, that we do not mind our concernments; or sloth, that keepeth us from rowling and bestirring our selves in pursuance of what appeareth expedient; or faint-heartedness and cowardice, that we dare not attempt to cross our appetite, or our fancy? all which dispositions are very base and shameful: It is the prerogative of humane nature to be sagacious in estimating the worth, and provident in descrying the consequences of things; whereas other creatures, by impulse of sense, do only fix their regard on present appearances; which peculiar excellency by stupidity and improvidence we forfeit, degenerating into brutes; and negligence of that, which we discern mainly to concern us is a quality somewhat beneath those, depressing us below beasts, which cannot be charged with such a fault; sloth is no less despicable, rendring a man fit for nothing; nor is there any thing commonly more reproachful than want of courage: so bad are the causes of delay.

2. And the effects are no less unhappy, being disappointment, damage, trouble and sorrow: As expedition (catching advantages and opportunities, keeping the spirit up in its heat and vigour, making forcible impressions where-
it lighteth, driving on the current of success) doth subdue business, and achieve great exploits (as by practising his Motto, *to defer nothing*, Alexander did accomplish those mighty feats which make such a clatter in story; and Caesar more by the rapid quickness and forwardness of undertaking; than by the greatness of courage, and skilfulness of conduct, did work out those enterprises, which purchased to his Name so much glory and renown) so delay and slowness do spoil all business, do keep off success at distance from us, thereby opportunity is lost, and advantages slip away; our courage doth flag, and our spirit languisheth; our endeavours strike faintly, and are easily repelled; whence disappointment necessarily doth spring, attended with vexation.

3. Again, we may consider, that to set upon our duty is a great step toward the performance of it; if we can resolve well, and a little push forward, we are in a fair way to dispatch; *to begin* (they say) *is to have half done*; to set out, is a good part of the journey; to rise betimes, is oftner harder than to do all the day's work; entering the Town, is almost the same with taking it; it is so in all business, it is chiefly so in moral practice: For if we can find in our hearts to take our leave of sin, if

we

Αργίας περι-
φασίας ἢ ἀνα-
βολῆς, Simpl.

Animal hoc pro-
vidum, sagax,
Cic. de leg. 1.
Cic. de offic. 1

Μηδὲν ἀνα-
βάλλειν. Hef.
Successus urgere
suos, instare,
Hef. Luc. 1.

Plerisque in rebus tarditas est procrastina-
tio odiosa est. Cic. Philip. 6.

Ἀλλὰ δ' ἀμβολιεργὸς ἀνὴρ ἄττησι πα-
λαίει. Hef.
Dum deliberamus quando incipiendum est,
incipere jam serum est. Quint. 12. 7.

Dimidium facti qui coepit habet.

Hor. Ep. 1. 2.

Μόνον ἀρχὴν ἐπιδέξ τῷ πρῶτῳ ματι,
Chryl. Tom. 6. Orat. p. 68.

Τὸ δυσχερὲς καὶ δυσκατάρδιον ὅσοτο
ἐστὶ, τὸ δυσηδυνῶν ἐπιβῶναι τὸ εὐσώδην καὶ
τῷ περιδύρων ἀπαρτὶς τὴ μετανοίας. Id.
p. 79.

we can disengage our selves from the witcheries of present allurements; if we can but get over the threshold, of virtuous conversation, we shall find the rest beyond expectation smooth and expedite; we shall discover such beauty in virtue, we shall taste so much sweetness in obedience, as greatly will encourage us to proceed therein.

Honestas, qua principio anxia habetur, ubi contigerit voluptati luxuriaque habetur. Vict. in Sept: Sev.

4. Again, we may consider, that our time it self is a gift, or a talent committed to us, for the improvement whereof we are responsible no less than for our Wealth, our Power, our Credit, our Parts, and other such advantages, wherewith for the serving of God, and furthering our own salvation we are intrusted: *To redeem the time* is a Precept; and of all Precepts the most necessary to be observed, for that without redeeming (that is embracing and well employing) time we can do nothing well; no good action can be performed, no good reward can be procured by us: Well may we be advised to take our best care in husbanding it, seeing justly of all things it may be reckoned most precious; its price being inestimable, and its loss irreparable; for all the World cannot purchase one Moment of it more than is allowed us, neither can it, when once gone, by any means be recovered: So much indeed as we save thereof, so much we preserve of our selves; and so far as we lose it, so far in effect we slay our selves, or deprive our selves of life; yea by mispending it we do worse than so; for a dead sleep, or cessation from being, is not so bad as doing ill; all that while we live backward, or decline toward a state much worse than annihilation it self. Farther

Eph. 5. 16. Col. 4. 5.

Πολυτελέστατον ἀνάγκημα.

5. Consider, that of all time the present is ever the best for the purpose of amending our life: It is the only sure time, that which we have in our hands, and may call our own; whereas the past time is irrevocably gone from us; and the future may never come to us: It is absolutely (reckoning from our becoming sensible of things, and accountable for our actions) the best, as to our capacity of improving it;

Omnia que ventura sunt in incerto jacent, protinus vive. Sen. de vit. brev. 9.

*Optima quaque dies miseris mortalibus ævi.
Prima fugit.*

Virg. Georg. 3.

Our best days do first pass away, was truly said; the nearer to its source our life is, the purer it is from stain, the freer from clogs, the more susceptible of good impressions, the more vivid and brisk in its activity; the farther we go on, especially in a bad course, the nearer we verge to the dregs of our life; the more dry, the more stiff, the more sluggish we grow; delay therefore doth ever steal away the flower of our age, leaving us the bran and refuse thereof. Again,

6. If at any time we do reflect upon the time that hath already slipped away unprofitably from us, it will seem more than enough, and (if we consider well) it will be grievous to us to lose more; the morrow will seem too late to commence a good life; ἀρκετός ὁ παρεληλυθὼς χρόνος, *The time past of our life* (saith St. Peter) *may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles*; or to have continued in ill courses; more indeed it might than suffice; it should be abundantly too much to have imbezelled so large a portion of our precious and irreparable time: After we have slept in neglect of our duty, ἀγρυπνῶν ἐν ἡμέρῃ, *it is* (as St. Paul saith) *now high time to awake*, unto a vigilant observance thereof: this we shall the rather do, if we consider, that

Sera nimis vita est crassima, vive hodie.

Matt. 1. 19. 1 Pet. 4. 3.

7. For ill living now we shall come hereafter to be sorry, if not with a wholesome contrition, yet with a painful regret; we shall certainly one day repent, if not of our sin, yet of our sinning; if not so as to correct for the future, yet so as to condemn our selves for what is past: the consideration of our having sacrilegiously robb'd our Maker of the time due to his service; of our having injuriously defrauded our souls of the opportunities granted to secure their welfare; of our having profusely cast away our most precious hours of life upon vanity and folly, will sometime twitch us sorely. There is no man who doth not with a sorrowful eye review an ill-past life; who would not gladly recal his mis-spent time; *O mihi prateritos!* O that God would re-

store my past years to me, is every such Man's Prayer, although it never was heard, never could be granted unto any. And what is more inconsistent with wisdom, than to engage our selves upon making such ineffectual and fruitless wishes? What is more disagreeable to reason, than to do that, for which we must be forced to confess and call our selves fools? What Man of sense for a flash of transitory Pleasure, for a puff of vain repute, for a few scraps of dirty Pelf would plunge himself into such a gulf of anguish?

8. On the contrary, if laying hold on occasion, we set our selves to do well, reflexion thereon will yield great satisfaction and pleasure to us; we shall be glad that we have done, and that our task is over; we shall *enjoy our former life*; Our time which is so past will not yet be lost unto us; but rather it will be most securely ours, laid up beyond the reach of danger, in the repository of a good conscience.

Ille sapit quisquis, Posthume, vixit heri.
Mart. 5. 60.

Ampliat ætatis spatium sibi vir bonus, hoc est,
Vivere bis, vita posse priore frui.
Mart. 10. 23.

-Rom. 2.

9. Again, all our time of continuance in sin we do *treasure up wrath*, or accumulate guilt; and the larger our guilt is, the sorer must be our repentance; the more bitter the sorrow, the more low the humbling, the more earnest the deprecation requisite to obtain pardon; the broader and deeper the stain is, the more washing is needful to get it out; if we sin much and long, we must grieve answerably, or we shall be no fit objects of mercy.

Quam magna deliquimus, tam granditer defleamus, &c.
Cyp. de Laps. Or. 5.

Pœna potest demi, culpa perennis erit.
Ovid.

Ἡ συγχώρησις ἐμυέτο τῆς ἀμαρτημάτων ὡς τὸ θεῶν, καὶ ἡ μνήμη τῆς συγχωρηθέντων ἀμαρτημάτων ἐν ἡρανίζετο ὡς τὸ Παύλῳ. Chrys. Tom. 8. p. 97.

Rom. 6. 21.

St. Paul, *What fruit had ye of those things, whereof ye are now ashamed?* If therefore we could reasonably presume, yea if we could certainly foresee, that we should hereafter in time repent, yet it were unadvisable to persist in sin, seeing it being once committed, can never be reversed; never expunged from the registers of time, never dashed out from the tables of our mind and memory; but will perpetually rest as matter of doleful consideration, and of tragical story to us. *Then shalt thou remember thy ways, and be ashamed. That thou mayst remember and be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more because of thy shame, when I am pacified toward thee for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord God: Then shall ye remember your own evil ways, and your doings that were not good, and shall loath your selves in your own sight, for your iniquities, and for your abominations.*

Ezek. 16. 61.
Ezek. 16. 63.

Ezek. 36. 31.
20. 43.

1 Cor. 15. 41.

Psalm. 1. 18.

11. Again, so much time as we spend in disobedience, so much of reward we do forfeit; for commensurate to our works shall our rewards be; the fewer our good works are in the course of our present life, the smaller shall be the measures of joy, of glory, of felicity dispensed to us hereafter; the later consequently we repent, the less we shall be happy: *One star* (saith the *Apostle*) *differeth from another in glory*; and of all stars, those in the celestial sphere will shine brightest, who did soon rise here, and continued long by the lustre of their good works to glorify their heavenly Father; for *the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day*. While therefore we let our interest lie dead by lingring, or run behind by sinful practice, we are very bad husbands for our soul; our spiritual estate doth thereby hugely suffer; every minute contracteth a damage that runneth through millions of ages, and which therefore will amount to an immense sum: And who for all the pleasures here would forego one degree of blissful joy hereafter; who for all earthly splendours would exchange one spark of celestial glory; who for all the treasures below would let slip one gem out of his heavenly crown?

12. Farther, let us consider that whatever our age, whatever our condition or case be, the advice not to procrastinate our obedience is very suitable and useful.

Art thou young? then it is most proper to enter upon living well. For when we set out, we should be put in a right way; when we begin to be Men, we should begin to use our reason well; life and virtue should be of the same standing; what is more ugly than a Child, that hath learnt little, having learnt to do ill; than naughtiness springing up in that state of innocence? The foundation of good life is to be laid in that age, upon which the rest of our life is built; for this is the manner of our proceeding; the present dependeth always upon what is past; our practice is guided by notions that we had sucked in, is swayed by inclinations that we got before; whence usually our first judgments of things, and our first propensions do stretch their influence upon the whole future life. *Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it, saith the Wise-man.* Sub pedagogo coeperis licet, seruum est. Matt. 8. 44. Prov. 22. 6.

That age as it is most liable to be corrupted by vice, so it is most capable of being imbued with virtue; then nature is soft and pliable, so as easily to be moulded into any shape, ready to admit any stamp impressed thereon; then the mind is a pure table, in which good principles may be fairly engraven, without rasing out any former ill prejudices; then the heart being a soil free of weeds, the seeds of goodness being cast therein will undisturbedly grow and thrive; then the complexion being tender will easily be set into a right posture; Our soul is then a Vessel empty and sweet; good liquor therefore may be instilled, which will both fit it, and season it with a durable tincture; the extream curiosity and huge credulity of that age, as they greedily will swallow any, so will they admit good instruction. If we do then imbibe false conceptions, or have bad impressions made on our minds, it will be hard afterwards to expel, or to correct them. Passion is then very fluid and moveable, but not being impetuously determined any way, may easily be derived into the right chanel. Then the quickness of our wit, the briskness of our fancy, the freshness of our memory, the vigour of our affections, the lusty and active mettle of our spirits being applied to virtuous studies and endeavours, will produce most noble fruits; the beauty of which will adorn us, the sweetness will please us, so as to leave on our minds a perpetual relish and satisfaction in goodness. Then being less encumbered with the cares, less intangled in the perplexities, less exposed to the temptations of the World and secular affairs, we can more easily set forth, we may proceed more expeditely in good courses. Then being void of that stinging remorse, which doth adhere to reflexions upon past follies, and mis-spent time, with more courage and alacrity we may prosecute good undertakings; then beginning so soon to embrace virtue, we shall have advantage with more leisure, and more ease to polish and perfect it through our ensuing course of life; setting out so early, in the very morning of our age, without much straining, marching on softly and fairly, we may go through our journey to happiness.

Our actions then are the first fruits of our life, which therefore are fit and due sacrifices to our Maker; which if we do withdraw, we shall have nothing left so worthy or acceptable to present unto him; will it be seemly to offer him the dregs and refuse of our age; shall we not be ashamed to bring a crazy temper of body and soul, dry bones and decayed senses; a dull fancy, a treacherous memory, a sluggish spirit before him? shall we then when we are fit for little begin to undertake his service? with our decrepit limbs and wasted strength shall we set our selves to *run the ways of his commandments?*

Natura tenacissimi sumus eorum qua rudibus annis percipimus, &c. Quint. 1. 1. Difficiliter eraditur quod rudes animi percipiunt. Hier. ad Lætam.

Ut corpora ad quosdam membrorum flexus formari nisi tenera non possunt, sic animos ad pleraque duriores robur ipsum facit. Quint. ib. Quo semel est imbuta recens servabit odorem Testa dia.

Hor. Ep. 1. 2.

Ἦδὲ γὰρ ὅτι χαλεπὸν ἢ νεότης, ὅτι δεισιπύον, ὅτι ἀεὶ ἀπάτητον, ὅτι δὲ ὀλίγον, καὶ σφοδρύτερος δὲ χαλινῶ. Chrys. ἀνδρ. α.

As it is uncomfortable to think of being parsimonious, when our stock is almost gone; so it is to become thrifty of our life, when it comes near the bottom. *Δεὴν ἐνὶ πυθμένι φεῖδω.*

If we keep innocency, spend our youth well, it will yield unexpressible comfort to us; it will save us much sorrow, it will prevent many inconveniences to us: If we have spent it ill, it will yield us great displeasure, it will cost us much pains; we shall be forced sadly to bewail our folly and vanity therein; it will be bitter to see, that we must unlive our former life, and undoe all we have done; that we must renounce the Principles we have avowed, we must root out the habits we have planted, we must forsake the Paths which we have beaten and so long trod in, if ever we will be happy; it will be grievous to us, when we come with penitential regret to deprecate, *Lord remember not the sins of my youth*; we shall feel fore pain, when *our bones are full of the sins of our youth*, and we come to possess the iniquities thereof.

Lam. 3. 27.
Fingit equum tenera docilem cervicem Magister
Ire viam, quam monstrat eques. — Hor.
Ep. 12. 1.

It is therefore good (as the Prophet saith) that a man bear the yoke in his youth, when his neck is tender; it is excellent advice which the Preacher giveth, *Remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, and the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say I have no pleasure in them.*

Eth. 1. 3.
Τῆς πολιτικῆς ἐκ ὅτιν οἰκεῖται ἀκερα-
τῆς ὁ νέος ἀπειρῶν γὰρ οὐκ ἔστι τὸ βίον
παράδειγμα ἐν τοῖς πάθεσιν ἀκολοθητι-
κὸς δὲ ματαίως ἀπόσεται καὶ ἀνωφελὴς.

Aristotle saith, that young men are not fit bearers of moral doctrine, because (saith he) they are unexperienced in affairs of life; and because they are apt to follow their passions, which indispose to hear with fruit or profit; but his conclusion is false, and his reasons may be well turned against him; for because young men want experience, therefore is there no bad prejudice, no contrary habit to obstruct their embracing sound doctrine; because their passions are vehement and strong, therefore being rightly ordered, and set upon good objects they with great force will carry them to virtuous practice; that indeed is the best time to regulate and tame Passions; as Horses must be broken when they are Colts, Dogs must be made when they are Whelps, else they will never be brought to any thing. The Poet therefore advised better than the Philosopher

Mor. Ep. 1. 2.

—nunc adhibe puro

Pectore verba puer, nunc te melioribus offer;

and St. Paul plainly doth confute him, when he biddeth Parents to educate their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; when he chargeth Titus, that he exhort young men to be sober-minded; when he commendeth Timothy, for that he had ἀπὸ βρέφους from his infancy known the Holy Scriptures; So doth the Psalmist, when he saith, *Wherewith shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed according to thy word.* And Solomon, when he declareth that his moral Precepts did serve to give subtilty to the simple, to the young man knowledge and discretion; when he biddeth us to train up a child in the way he should go; St. Peter doth intimate the same, when he biddeth us, as new born babes to desire the sincere milk of the word; and our Saviour, when he said, *Suffer little children to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of God*; that is, the more Simplicity and Innocence a Man is endued with, the more apt he is to embrace and comply with the Evangelical Doctrine: Aristotle therefore was our, when he would exclude young Men from the Schools of Virtue. It is observable that he contradicteth himself; for *Οὐ μικρὸν διαφέρει τὸ ἔως ἢ ἔως, οὐδὲς ἐκ νέων ἐδίδεατο, ἀλλὰ πάμπλου, μάλλον δὲ τὸ πᾶν.* It is (saith he) of no small concernment to be from youth accustomed thus or thus; yea, 'tis very much, or rather all: And how shall a young Man be accustomed to do well, if he be not allowed to learn what is to be done?

Again, are we old? it is then high time to begin; we have then less time to spare from our most important Business; we stand then in most imminent Danger, upon the Edge of Perdition, and should therefore be nimble to skip out thence; our Forces being diminished, our Quickness and Industry should be

en-

increased; the later we set out, the more speed it behoveth us to make. * If we stay, we shall grow continually more indisposed and unfit to amend; it will be too late, when utter Decrepitnes and Dotage have seized upon us; and our Body doth survive our Soul. When so much of our Time, of our Parts, of our Strength are fled, we should husband the rest to best advantage, and make the best satisfaction we can unto God, and unto our Souls with the Remainder.

This Age hath some peculiar Advantages, which we should embrace: the Froth of Humours is then boiled out, the Fervours of Lust are slacked, Passions are allayed, Appetites are flatted; so that then Inclinations to sin are not so violent, nor doth the Enjoyment thereof so much gratifie.

Long Experience then hath discovered the Vanity of all worldly things, and the Mischief of ill Courses; so that we can then hardly admire any thing, or be fond of enjoying what we have found unprofitable or hurtful.

Age is excused from Compliance with the Fashions, and thence much exempted from Temptations of the World; so that it may be good without Obstacle or Opposition.

It is proper thereto to be grave and serious, and consequently to be virtuous; for Gravity without Virtue and Seriousness about vain things are ridiculous.

Nothing doth so adorn this Age as Goodness, nothing doth so disgrace it as Wickedness; *The hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness*; but it is a mark of Infamy, if it be observed proceeding in a course of Iniquity, it signifieth that Experience hath not improved it, it argueth incorrigible Folly, or rather incurable Madnes therein.

There is indeed no Care, no Employment proper for old Men but to prepare for their Dissolution; to be bidding adieu to the World with its vain Poms and mischievous Pleasures; the packing up their Goods, to be casting their Accounts, to be fitting themselves to abide in that State into which they are tumbling, to appear at that Bar, before which suddenly Nature will set them. As a Ship which hath long been tofs'd and Weather-beaten, which is shattered in its Timber, and hath lost much of its Rigging, should do nothing in that case but work toward the Port, there to find its Safety and Ease; so should a Man, who having past many Storms and Agitations of the World is grievously battered and torn with Age, strive only to die well, to get safe into the Harbour of eternal Rest.

In fine, *Epicurus* himself said well, that *no man is either immature or over-ripe in regard to his soul's health*; we can never set upon it too soon, we should never think it too late to begin; to live well is always the best thing we can do, and therefore we should at any time endeavour it; there are common Reasons for all Ages, there are special Reasons for each Age, which most strongly and most clearly do urge it; it is most seasonable for young Men, it is most necessary for old Men, it is most adviseable for all Men *.

omnis at. (neque enim recta voluntati serum est tempus ullum) totis mentibus huc tendamus, in hoc elaboremus; forsitan contingat.

Qu. Rt. 12. I.

Again, be our Condition what it will, this Advice is reasonable: Are we in Health? we owe God Thanks for that excellent Gift, and the best Gratitude we can express is the improving it for his Service and to our own Good; we should not lose the Advantage of a Season so fit for our Obedience and Repentance; while the Forces of our Body and Mind are entire, while we are not discomposed by Pain or Faintness, we should strive to dispatch this needful Work, for which Infirmary may disable us.

Are we sick? it is then time to consider our Frailty, and the best we can to obviate the worst Consequences thereof: It is then very fit, when we do feel the sad Effects of Sin, to endeavour the Prevention of worse Mischiefs that may follow; it is seasonable, when we lie under God's correcting Hand, to submit

Quod facere solent qui serius exiunt — calcar adamus. Sen. Ep. 68. 76. 19.

Αποκ. 3. 2. Στήθειζον τὰ λοιπὰ, ἃ μέλλει ἀποθανεῖν.

— non omnia grandior aetas
Qua fugiamus habet — Ovid.

Ἡ γὰρ τὸ νεώτερος πελάγει προσέοικε
μακροτέρῳ κυμάτων ἀγρίων, καὶ πινδύ-
ματων γέμοντι πονηρῶν· ἢ ὅτι πολλὰ ὄσ-
περ εἰς λιμὸν ἀκύναντον τὰς ψυχὰς γε-
νησκότων ὁρμίζει ψυχὰς, παρέχουσα τῇ
ἀσθενείᾳ τῆς ἡλικίας ἐντευφῶν ἀσφαλείην.
Chrys. Tom. 6. Orat. 38.

In freto vixi-
mus, moriamur
in portu. Sen.
Ep. 19.

* Οὐτ' ἄνωγ' εἰσεῖς ὄαν, ἔτε πάρωγ'
πρὸς τὸ καὶ ψυχῇ ὑγιαίνον. Epic. ad
Monéc.

* Quare ju-
ventus, immo
et consummatio

mit unto him, to deprecate his Wrath, to seek Reconciliation with him by all kinds of Obedience suitable to that State; with serious Resolutions to amend hereafter, if it shall please God to restore us; it is most adviseable, when we are in the Borders of Death, to provide for that State which lieth just beyond it.

Are we rich and prosperous? 'tis expedient then presently to amend, lest our Wealth do soon corrupt us with Pride, with Luxury, with Sloth, with Stupidity; lest our Prosperity becometh an inevitable Snare, an irrecoverable Bane unto us.

Are we poor or afflicted? 'tis then also needful to repent quickly; that we may have a comfortable Support for our Soul, and a certain Succour in our Distress; that we may get a Treasure to supply our Want, a Joy to drown our Sorrow; a Buoy to keep our Hearts from sinking into Desperation and Disconsolateness. This Condition is a Medicine, which God administheth for our Soul's Health; if it do not work presently so as to do us good, it will prove both grievous and hurtful to us

12. Lastly, we may consider, that abating all the rueful Consequences of abiding in Sin, abstracting from the desperate Hazards it exposeth us to in regard to the future Life, it is most reasonable to abandon it, betaking our selves to a virruous Course of Practice. For Virtue in it self is far more eligible than Vice, to keep God's Commandments hath much greater Convenience than to

*Est virtus nihil aliud quam in se perfecta,
& ad summum perducta natura. Cic. de
Leg. 1.*

break them; the Life of a good Man in all considerable respects is highly to be preferred above the Life of a bad Man: for what is Virtue, but a way of living that advan-

ceth our Nature into a Similitude with God's most excellent and happy Nature; that promoteth our true Benefit and Interest; that procureth and preserveth Health, Ease, Safety, Liberty, Peace, comfortable Subsistence, fair Repute, Tranquillity of Mind, all kinds of Convenience to us? to what Ends did our most benign and most wise Maker design and suit his Law, but to the furthering our good, and securing us from Mischief, as not only himself hath declared, but Reason sheweth, and Experience doth attest? What is Vice but a sort of practice which debaseth and disparageth us, which plungeth us into grievous Evils, which bringeth Distemper of Body and Soul, Distress of Fortune, Danger, Trouble, Reproach, Regret, and numberless Inconveniencies upon us; which for no other reason, than because it so hurteth and grieveth us, was by our loving Creator interdicted to us? Virtue is most noble and worthy, most lovely, most profitable, most pleasant, most creditable; Vice is most fordid and base, ugly, hurtful, bitter, disgraceful in its self, and in its consequences. If we compare them together, we shall find that Virtue doth always preserve our Health, but Vice commonly doth impair it; that Virtue improveth our Estate, Vice wasteth it; that Virtue adorneth our Reputation, Vice blemisheth it; that Virtue strengtheneth our parts, Vice weakeneth them; that Virtue maintaineth our Freedom, Vice enslaveth us; that Virtue keepeth our Mind in Order and Peace, Vice discomposeth and disquieteth it; Virtue breedeth Satisfaction and Joy, Vice spawneth Displeasure and Anguish of Conscience: To enter therefore into a virtuous course of Life, what is it but to embrace Happiness; to continue in vicious Practice, what is it but to sink in Misery?

By entring into good Life, we enter into the Favour and Friendship of God, engaging his infinite Power and Wisdom for our Protection, our Succour, our Direction and Guidance; enjoying the sweet Effluxes of his Mercy and Bounty; we therewith become Friends to the holy Angels, and blessed Saints; to all good Men, being united in a holy and happy Consortship of Judgment, of Charity, of Hope, of Devotion with them; we become Friends to all the World, which we oblige by good Wishes, and good Deeds, and by the Influence of good Example: we become Friends to our selves, whom we thereby enrich and adorn with the best Goods; whom we gratifie and please with the choicest Delights: but persisting in Sin, we continue to affront, wrong, and displease our Maker, to be disloyal towards our Sovereign Lord; to be ingrateful towards our chief Benefactor, to disoblige the best Friend we have, to provoke

Deut. 10. 13;
Mic. 6. 8.
Neh. 9. 13.
Rom. 7. 12.
Psal. 19. 9.
119. 107.

provoke a most just and severe Judge, to cope with Omnipotency, to contradict Infallibility, to enrage the greatest Patience, to abuse immense Goodness; We thereby become Enemies to all the World, to God, whom we injure and dishonour; to the Friends of God, whom we desert and oppose; to the Creatures, which we abuse to our Pride, Lust and Vanity; to our Neighbours, whom we corrupt or seduce; to our selves, whom we bereave of the best Goods, and betray to the worst Evils.

Beginning to live soberly, we begin to live like Men, following the Conduct of Reason; beginning to live in Charity, we commence the Life of Angels, enjoying in our selves most sweet Content, and procuring great Benefit to others; but going on in sinful Voluptuousness, we proceed to live like Beasts, wholly guided by Sense, and swayed by Appetite; being pertinacious in Malice, we continue to be like Fiends, working torment in our selves, and Mischief to our Neighbours.

Embracing Virtue we become wise and sober Men, worthy and honourable; beneficial and useful to the World; but continuing in Vice, we continue to be foolish and vain, to be vile and despicable, to be worthless and useless.

By our Delay to amend, what do we gain? what, but a little flashy and transient Pleasure instead of a solid and durable Peace; but a little counterfeit Profit instead of real Wealth; but a little Smoak of deceitful Opinion instead of unquestionable sound Honour; Shadows of imaginary Goods instead of those which are most substantial and true, a good Mind, the Love of God, the assured Welfare of our Souls. But this Field of Discourse is too spacious; I shall only therefore for Conclusion say, that speedily applying our selves to Obedience, and breaking off our Sins by Repentance, is in effect nothing else but from a present Hell in Trouble, and the Danger of a final Hell in Torment, to be translated into a double Heaven; one of joyful Tranquillity here, another of blissful Rest hereafter; unto the which Almighty God in his Mercy bring us all, through Jesus Christ our Lord; to whom for ever be all Glory and Praise. *Amen.*

1 Thef. 5. 23.

The very God of peace sanctifie you wholly, and I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

S E R M O N XVIII.

Of Industry in general.

E C C L E S. IX. 10.

Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might.

Rom. 21. 11.

Πασα σπουδή.
2 Cor. 8. 7.

IN St. Paul's Epistle to the *Romans*, among divers excellent Rules of Life, prescribed by that great Master, this is one, Τῇ σπουδῇ μὴ ὀκνηθῆναι. *Be not slothful in business*, or to Business; And in the 2d Epistle to the *Corinthians*, among other principal Virtues, or worthy Accomplishments, for *abounding* wherein the *Apostle* commendeth those Christians, he ranketh *all diligence*, or industry exercised in all Affairs and Duties incumbent on them: this is that Virtue, the Practice whereof in this moral Precept or Advice the *Royal Preacher* doth recommend unto us; being indeed an eminent Virtue, of very general Use, and powerful Influence upon the Management of all our Affairs, or in the Conduct of our whole Life.

Industry, I say, in general, touching all Matters incident, which *our hand findeth to do*, that is, which Dispensation of Providence doth offer, or which choice of Reason embraceth, for employing our active Powers of Soul and Body, the *Wise-man* doth recommend; and to pressing the Observance of his Advice (waving all curious Remarks either *Critical* or *Logical* upon the Words) I shall presently apply my Discourse, proposing divers Considerations apt to excite us thereto; only first, let me briefly describe it, for our better Apprehension of its true Notion and Nature.

By Industry we understand a serious and steady Application of Mind, joyned with a vigorous Exercise of our active Faculties in prosecution of any reasonable, honest, useful Design, in order to the Accomplishment, or Attainment of some considerable Good; as for instance, a *Merchant* is industrious who continueth intent and active in driving on his Trade for acquiring Wealth; a *Soldier* is industrious, who is watchful for occasion, and earnest in Action towards obtaining the Victory; and a *Scholar* is industrious, who doth assiduously bend his Mind to study for getting Knowledge.

Ἡ γὰρ ψυχὴ φύσιν ἔχουσα τὸ κινεῖσθαι διαπαντός, καὶ ἀνίσχεται ἡρεμῶν. ἐμπράκτω τὸ ζῶον πάντα ἐπώλινεν ὁ Θεός, &c.
Chrys. in Act. Or. 35.

Industry doth not consist merely in Action; for that is incessant in all Persons, our Mind being a restless thing never abiding in a total Cessation from Thought or from Design (being like a Ship in the Sea, if not steered to some good purpose by reason, yet tossed by the Waves of Fancy,

or driven by the Winds of Temptation somewhither.) But the direction of our Mind to some good End, without roving or flinching, in a straight and steady course, drawing after it our active Powers in execution thereof, doth constitute Industry; the which therefore usually is attended with Labour and Pain; for our Mind (which naturally doth affect Variety and Liberty, being apt to loath familiar Objects, and to be weary of any Constraint) is not easily kept in a constant Attention to the same thing; And the Spirits employed in Thought are prone to flutter and fly away, so that it is hard to fix them: And the corporeal Instruments of Action being strained to a high pitch, or detained in a Tone will soon feel a Lassitude, somewhat offensive to Nature; whence Labour or Pain is commonly reckoned an Ingredient of Industry; and Laboriousness is a Name signifying it; upon which Account this Virtue (as involving Labour) deserveth a peculiar Commendation; it being then most laudable to follow the Dictates of Reason, when so doing is attended with Difficulty and Trouble.

Such

•Such in general I conceive to be the nature of Industry; to the practice whereof the following Considerations may induce.

1. We may consider that Industry doth besit the Constitution and Frame of our Nature; all the Faculties of our Soul, and Organs of our Body being adapted in a Congruity and Tendency thereto: Our Hands are suited for Work, our Feet for Travel, our Senses to watch for occasion of pursuing Good, and eschewing Evil, our Reason to plod and contrive Ways of employing the other Parts and Powers; all these, I say, are formed for Action; and that not in a loose and gadding way; or in a slack and remiss degree, but in regard to determinate Ends, with Vigour requisite to attain them; and especially our Appetites do prompt to Industry, as inclining to things not attainable without it; according to that Aphorism of the *Wise-man*, *Ἐπιθυμία δὲ ἀκηρὸν ἀποκτείνεισιν* — *The Desire of the slothful killeth him, for his hands refuse to labour*; that Prov. 21. 25. is, he is apt to desire things which he cannot attain without Pains; and not enduring them he for want thereof doth feel a deadly Smart and Anguish: Wherefore in not being industrious we defeat the intent of our Maker; we pervert his Work and Gifts; we forfeit the Use and Benefit of our Faculties; we are bad Husbands of Natures Stock.

2. In consequence hereto Industry doth preserve and perfect our Nature; keeping it in good tune and temper; improving and advancing it toward its best state. The Labour of our Mind in attentive Meditation and Study doth render it capable and patient of thinking upon any Object or Occasion; doth polish and refine it by use, doth enlarge it by Accession of Habits; doth quicken and rowse our Spirits, dilating and diffusing them into their proper Channells: The very labour of our Body doth keep the Organs of Action sound and clean, discussing Fogs and superfluous Humours, opening Passages, distributing Nourishment, exciting vital Heat: Barring the use of it, no good Constitution of Soul or Body can subsist; but a foul Rust, a dull Numbness, a resty Listlessness, a heavy Unweildiness must seize on us; our Spirits will be stifled and choaked, our Hearts will grow faint and languid, our Parts will flag and decay; the Vigour of our Mind, and the Health of our Body will be much impaired.

It is with us as with other things in nature, which by Motion are preserved in their native Purity and Perfection, in their Sweetness, in their Lustre, Rest corrupting, debasing and defiling them; If the Water runneth it holdeth clear, sweet and fresh; but Stagnation turneth it into a noisome Puddle: If the Air be fanned by Winds, it is pure and wholesome, but from being shut up it groweth thick and putrid; If Metals be employed, they abide smooth and splendid; but lay them up, and they soon contract Rust; If the Earth be belaboured with Culture, it yieldeth Corn; but lying neglected, it will be overgrown with Brakes and Thistles; and the better its Soil is the ranker Weeds it will produce; all nature is upheld in its Being, Order and State by constant Agitation; every Creature is incessantly employed in Action conformable to its designed End and Use; In like manner the Preservation and Improvement of our Faculties depends on their constant Exercise.

3. As we naturally were composed, so by Divine Appointment we were originally designed for Industry; God did not intend that Man should live idly, even in his best State; or should enjoy Happiness without taking pains; but did provide Work enough even in Paradise itself; for *The Lord God* (saith the Gen. 2. 15. Text) *took man, and put him into the Garden of Eden to dress it, and to keep it*, so that had we continu'd happy, we must have been ever busie, by our Industry sustaining our Life, and securing our Pleasure; otherwise Weeds might have overgrown Paradise, and that of *Solomon* might have been applicable to *Adam*, *I went by the field of the slothful, and by the vineyard of the man void of understanding, and loe it was all grown over with thorns, and nettles had covered the face thereof*. Prov. 24. 30.

4. By our Transgression and Fall the necessity of Industry (together with a Difficulty of obtaining Good, and avoiding Evil) was encreased to us; being

Πάντα γὰρ ἢ ἀργία ἐλάττω, καὶ τὰ μέλη σώματι αὐτῷ, ὅτι. Chryl. in Act. Orat. 35.

Πρώτον μὲν γὰρ τοιοῦτε τὸ σῶμα ἐκλυτον, ὅτι. Ibid.

Ποῖον ἴππον χρῆσιμον, ὃ τρυφῶν ἢ ὃ ἐργαζόμενον; ποῖαν αὐτὸς, ἢ πλεῖστα ἢ ἢ ἀργεῖσα, ποῖον ὕδωρ, τὸ τρέχον, ἢ τὸ ἐστῶς; ποῖον σίδηρον, ὃ κείμενον, ἢ ὃ ἐργαζόμενον, ὅτι. Chryl. ibid.

Neglectis urenda filix innascitur agris. Hor. Ser. 1. 3.

Plat. περὶ παιδ. p. 3.

ordained both as a just Punishment for our Offences, and as an Expedient Remedy of our Needs: For thereupon *the Ground was cursed to bring forth thorns and thistles to us*; and it was our Doom pronounced by God's own Mouth, *In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread till thou return unto the ground*; so that now Labour is fatally natural to us; now Man (as Job saith) *is born to labour as the sparks fly upward* (or, as the Vultur's chickens soar aloft, according to the Greek Interpreters.)

Gen. 3. 17----

Job. 5. 7.

Ἄλλ' ἀνθρώπων

ἡ γένεσις ἀπὸ τοῦ πυρὸς ὡς ἀνέβη τὰ πετεινὰ τοῦ βυθίου

ἢ γυπὸς ὑψιλά πέτονται. LXX. Interp. Now great Travel (as the Son of Sirach saith) is created for every Man; (ἀρχολία μεγάλη ἐκίσει παντὶ ἀνθρώπῳ, Eccl. 4c. 1.) and an heavy Yoke is upon the Sons of Adam, &c.

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5. Accordingly our Condition and Circumstances in the World are so ordered, as to require Industry; so that without it we cannot support our Life in any Comfort or Convenience; whence St. Paul's Charge upon the *Theſſalonians*, that *If any one would not work, neither should he eat*, is in a manner a general Law imposed on Mankind by the Exigency of our State, according to that of Solomon; *The idle soul shall suffer hunger*; and, *The sluggard who will not plow by reason of the cold, shall beg in harvest, and have nothing*.

2 Thel. 3. 10.

Prov. 19. 15.

Prov. 20. 4.

Of all our many Necessities, none can be supplied without Pains, wherein all Men are obliged to bear a share; Every Man is to work for his Food, for his Apparel, for all his Accommodations, either immediately and directly, or by Commutation and Equivalence; for the *Gentleman* himself cannot (at least worthily and inculpably) obtain them otherwise, than by redeeming them from the Plowman and the Artificer, by Compensation of other Cares and Pains conducive to publick Good.

The wise *Poet* did observe well when he said,

Vir. Geor. 1.

—*Pater ipse colendi*

Haud facilem esse viam voluit.

and St. *Chrysostome* doth propose the same Observation, that God to whet our Mind, and keep us from moping, would not that we should easily come by the Fruits of the Earth, without employing much Art and many Pains; in order thereto there must be Skill used in observing Seasons, and preparing the Ground; there must be Labour spent in manuring, in delving and plowing, in sowing, in weeding, in fencing it; there must

—*curis acuens mortalia corda;*

Nec torpere gravi passus sua regna veterno.

(Virg. *Ibid.*)

Διὰ τὸτο εἰς ἀνάγκην κατέστησεν ἐργασίας ὁ Θεός, &c. Chrysost. in Act.

Hom. 35.

be Pains taken in reaping, in gathering, in laying up, in threshing, and dressing the Fruit e'er we can enjoy it: So much Industry is needful to get Bread; and if we list to fare more daintily, we must either hunt for it, using Craft and Toil to catch it out of the Woods, the Water, the Air; or we must carefully wait on those Creatures, of which we would serve our selves, feeding them that they may feed us; such Industry is required to preserve Mankind from starving. And to guard it from other Inconveniences, Mischiefs and Dangers surrounding us, it is no less requisite: for to shelter us from Impressions of Weather, we must spin, we must weave, we must build; and in order thereto we must scrape into the Bowels of the Earth to find our Tools, we must sweat at the Anvil to forge them for our Use; we must frame Arms to defend our Safety, and our Store from the Assaults of wild Beasts, or of more dangerous Neighbours, wild Men. To furnish Accommodations for our Curiosity and Pleasure, or to provide for the Convenience and Ornament of our Life, still greater measures of Industry are demanded; to satisfy those Intents, a thousand Contrivances of Art, a thousand ways of Trade and Business do serve, without which they are not attainable. In whatever Condition any Man is, in what State soever he be placed, whatsoever Calling or way of Life he doth embrace, some peculiar Business is thence imposed on him, which he cannot with any Advantage or good Success, with any Grace, with any Comfort to himself, or Satisfaction to others, manage without competent Industry; nothing will go on of it self without our Care to direct it, and our Pains to hold it, and forward it in the right Course: All which things shew that Divine Wisdom did intend that we should live in the Exercise of Industry, or not well without it; having so many Needs to be supplied, so many Desires to be appeased thereby; being exposed to so many Troubles and Difficulties, from which we cannot extricate our selves without it. But farther yet,

6. Let us consider that Industry hath annexed thereto, by Divine Appointment and Promise, the fairest Fruits, and the richest Rewards: All good things (being

(being either such in themselves, or made such by Humane Esteem) are the Fruits of Industry; ordered to sprout from it, under the Protection and Influence of God's Blessing, which commonly doth attend it.

All good things indeed are the Gift of God, and freely dispensed by his Hand; but he doth not give them absolutely without Condition, nor miraculously without Concurrence of ordinary means: By supporting our active Powers, and supplying needful Aid to our Endeavours; by directing and upholding us in the course of our Action; by preventing or removing Obstacles that might cross us; by granting that final Success which dependeth on his Pleasure, he doth confer them on us; Our Hand commonly is God's Hand by which he worketh good, and reacheth out Benefits to us; governing and wielding it as he pleaseth. Pf. 37. 3. 23. Prov. 3. 6. Dii laboribus omnia vendunt. Judg. 6. 36. 7. 7.

God indeed could not well proceed otherwise in dispensing his Favours to us; not well, I say; that is, not without subverting the Method of things which himself hath established; not without flighting and voiding his own first Bounty, or rendring the common Gifts of Nature (our Reason, our Senses, our active Powers) vain and useles; not without making us incapable of any Praise, or any Reward, which suppose Works atchieved by our earnest Endeavour; not without depriving us of that sweetest Content, which springeth from enjoying the fruit of our Labour. 2 Kings 5. 2. Josh. 1. 17, 9.

Hence it is, that whatever in holy Scripture is called the Gift of God, is otherwhile affirmed to be the effect of Industry; it being the useful Condition upon which, and the Instrument whereby divine Providence conveyeth good things to us: What God said to *Joshua*, doth imply the general Method of his Proceeding, *Only, be thou strong and courageous — that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest.*

Hence whatever we are directed to pray for, we are also exhorted to work for; declaring thereby, that we are serious in our Devotion, and do not mock God, asking that of him, which we deem not worth our Pains to acquire. It was well said of *Cato* in *Salust*, *Vigilando, agendo, consulendo, prosperè omnia cedunt, ubi socordiae te atque ignavia tradideris nequicquam Deos implores, irati infestique sunt.* We are bid to pray even for our daily Bread, yet we may starve if we do not work for it; and in *St. Paul's* Judgment deserve to do so. Αυτός τι ὕψι δρῶν εἶτα τὸς θεὸς κἀλεῖ. Cato apud Sal. in bello Catil.

Hence we are bound to thank God for all those things, for the want of which we must thank our selves, and condemn our own Sloth.

Hence, although we should cast our Care on God, and relie on his Providence, being solicitous for nothing; yet we must not so trust him, as to tempt him, by neglecting the means which he doth offer, of relieving our selves; to be presumptuously slothful being no less blameable, than to be distrustfully careful.

Hence God in all such Cases, when we do need any good thing, is said to be our Helper and Succourer to the obtaining it; which doth imply that we must co-operate with him; and joyn our Forces to those, which He doth afford; so that as we can do nothing without him, so he will do nothing without us: yea, so that sometime we are said also to help God; *Curse ye Meroz, curse ye utterly the inhabitants thereof; because they came not to the help of the Lord; to the help of the Lord against the mighty.* If ever God doth perform all without Human Labour conspiring, it is only in behalf of those who are ready to do their best, but unable to do any thing, being overpowered by the insuperable difficulty of things; But He never doth act Miracles, or controul Nature, he never doth stretch forth his Arm, or interpose special Power in favour of wilful and affected Sluggards. Judg. 5. 13. Psal. 72. 12. 22. 11. 2 Cor. 12. 10. 2 Chron. 14. 11. 1 Sam. 14. 6.

In fine, it is very plain both in common Experience, declaring the course of Providence, and in Holy Scripture, expressing God's Intention, that Almighty God doth hold forth all good things as the Prizes and Recompences of our vigilant Care, and painful Endeavour; as by surveying Particulars we may clearly discern.

Nothing is more grateful to Men, than *prosperous Success* in their Undertakings, whereby they attain their Ends, satisfy their Desires, save their Pains, and

Τῆς ἐπιμελείας πάντα δόξα γίνε-
ται. Antiph.
*Quodcumque imperavit sibi animus, ob-
nuat, &c. Sen. de Ir. 2. 12.*

and come off with Credit; this commonly is the Effect of Industry (which commandeth Fortune, to which all things submit and serve) and scarce ever is found without it; An industrious Person, who as such is not apt to attempt things

impossible or unpracticable, can hardly fail of compassing his Designs, because he will apply all means requisite, and bend all his Forces thereto; striving to break through all Difficulties, and to subdue all Oppositions thwarting his Purposes: But nothing of worth or weight, can be atchieved with half a Mind, with a faint Heart, with a lame Endeavour; Any Enterprize undertaken without Resolution, managed without Care, prosecuted without Vigour, will easily be dashed and prove abortive, ending in Disappointment, Damage, Disgrace, and Dissatisfaction: So the *Wise-man* doth assure us: *The soul (saith he) of the sluggard desireth and hath nothing, but the soul of the diligent shall be made fat; the one pineth away with ineffectual and fruitless Desires; the other thriveth upon Satisfaction in prosperous Success.*

Prov. 13. 4.
21. 25.

Prov. 15. 30.
Ps. 65. 9, 11.
Gen. 21. 28.

Plentiful Accommodations for our Sustenance and Convenience all Men will agree to be very desirable; and these are indeed the Blessings of him, who *visiteth the earth and enricheth it; who crowneth the year with his goodness, and, whose clouds drop fatness; but they are so dispensed by Heaven, that Industry must concur therewith in deriving them to us, and Sloth will debar us of them; for He (saith the Holy Oracle) that tilleth his land, shall be satisfied with bread; and the thoughts of the diligent alone tend to plenteousness; but The sluggard shall beg in harvest, and have nothing; and The idle soul shall suffer hunger.*

Prov. 21. 11.
Prov. 31. 5.
(deest in LXX)
Prov. 20. 4.
Prov. 19. 15.

Wealth is that, which generally Men of all things are wont to affect and covet with most ardent Desire, as the great Store-house of their Needs and Conveniences, the sure Bulwark of their State and Dignity; the universal Instrument of compassing their Designs and Pleasures; And most evident it is, that in the natural course of things, Industry is the way to acquire it, to secure it, to improve and enlarge it; the which Course pursued innocently and modestly, God will be so far from obstructing, that he will further and bless it; for that indeed it would be a Flaw in Providence, if honest Industry, using the means it affordeth, should fail of procuring a Competency; which joyned with a pious Contentedness in St. Paul's Computation, is *great wealth*. Wherefore although Solomon telleth us, that *the blessing of the Lord is that which maketh rich; yet doth he not forget or contradict himself, when he also doth affirm, that The hand of the diligent maketh rich; and that He who gathereth by labour shall increase; because God blesteth the Industrious, and by his own Hand, as the most proper Instrument, maketh him rich; when the Preacher said, There is a man to whom God hath given riches and wealth, he knew well enough what Man it was, to whom God giveth them; and that Sluggards were not fit Objects of that Liberality: For he had observed it to be their Doom, to be poor and beggarly, their Nature to waste and embezel an Estate; He could assure us, that *Trowfiness shall cloath a man with rags; He could propound it as a certain Observation, that He who is slothful in his work, is brother to a great waster; or that want of Industry in our Business will no less impair our Estate, than Prodigality it self; He could more than once warn the Slothful, that if he did sleep on, or persist in his sluggish way, Indigency would surprize and seize on him with an insupportable Violence: So (saith he) shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth, and thy want as an armed man.**

1 Tim. 6. 6.
Prov. 15. 16.
Prov. 10. 22.
22. 4.
2 Chron. 29. 12.
Ecclef. 5. 19.
Prov. 10. 4.
13. 11.
Ecclef. 6. 1, 2.
S. Paul exhort-
eth to work
with our hands
ἐν τῇ ἰδίᾳ
ἐργασίᾳ
1 Thes. 4. 12.
Prov. 23. 21.
Prov. 18. 9.
Prov. 10. 4.
Prov. 6. 11.
24. 32.

Another Darling of Humane Affection (and a Jewel indeed of considerable worth and use in our Life) is *Honour*, or Reputation among Men: This also plainly, after the common Reason and Course of things, is purchased and preserved by Industry: For he that aspireth to worthy things, and assayeth laudable Designs, pursuing them steadily with serious Application of Heart, and resolute Activity will rarely fail of good Success, and consequently will not miss Honour, which ever doth crown Victory; And if he should hap to fail in his Design, yet he will not lose his Credit; for having meant well, and done his best, all will be ready to excuse, many to commend him: The very Qualities which Industry doth exercise, and the Effects which it doth produce, to beget Honour; as being ornaments of our Person and State. God himself (from whom *honour cometh*, and whose special Prerogative it is to bestow it, he, as

King

King of the World, being the Fountain of Honour) will be concerned to dignifie an industrious Management of his Gifts with that natural and proper Recompence thereof; conducting him who fairly treadeth in the Path of Honour, that he shall safely arrive unto it. It is therefore a Matter of easie Observation which the wise Prince doth prompt us to mark; *Seest thou a man diligent in his business? he shall stand before kings, he shall not stand before mean men*; that is, Diligence, as it is the fairest, so it is the surest way to the best Preferment; as it qualifyeth a Man for Employment, and rendereth him useful to the World, so it will procure worthy Employment for him, and attract the World to him; as the same great Author again doth assert. *The hand, saith he, of the diligent shall bear rule*; Yea, so honourable a thing is Industry it self; that an Exercise thereof in the meanest Rank is productive of Esteem, as the *Wise-man* again doth observe and tell us; *He that waiteth on his master* (that is, with Diligence attendeth on the Business committed to him) *shall be honoured*.

No industrious Man is contemptible; for he is ever looked upon as being in a way of thriving, of working himself out from any straits, of advancing himself into a better Condition. But without Industry we cannot expect any thing but Disrespect, Shame and Reproach, which are the certain Portion of the Slothful; he not having the Heart to enterprize or the Resolution and Patience to atchieve any thing deserving Regard, or apt to procure it; he wanting all the Ornaments and good Fruits that grow from Industry; he being only fit for a sordid and servil Condition; whence *the slothful* (saith Solomon) *shall be under tribute*; and, *He that sleepeth in harvest, is a son that causeth shame*; He causeth it to his Relations by his begarly Accoutrements, he causeth it much more to himself by his despicable Faultiness, and by the disgraceful Consequences of it.

Another yet more precious Good, far surpassing all external Advantages of our State; the which in the Judgment of him who (together with it having a full possession of all secular Prosperity, Wealth, Dignity and Power) was best able to prize it, *is better than Rubies, and incomparably doth excel all things that may be desired*, as ennobling, enriching and embellishing our better part: *Wisdom*, I mean, or a good Comprehension, and right Judgment about Matters of highest importance to us, is the Prize of Industry, and not to be gained without it; Nature conferreth little thereto, Fortune contributeth much less; it cannot be bought at any rate; *It cannot* (saith Job) *be gotten for gold, neither shall silver be weighed for the price thereof; it cannot be valued with the Gold of Ophir, with the precious Onyx or the Sapphire*; it is the Off-spring of watchful Observation and Experience, of serious Meditation and Study; of careful Reflexion on things, marking, comparing and weighing their Nature, thier Worth, their Tendencies and Consequences; these are needful to the getting of Wisdom, because Truth, which it seeketh, commonly doth not lie in the Surface, obvious to a superficial Glance, nor only dependeth on a simple Consideration of few things; but is lodged deep in the Bowels of things, and under a knotty Complication of various Matters; so that we must dig to come at it, and labour in unfolding it: Nor is it an easie Task to void the Prejudices springing from Inclination or Temper, from Education or Custom, from Passion and Interest, which cloud the Mind, and obstruct the Attainment of Wisdom.

If we will have it, we must get it as Solomon himself did, that great Master of it. How was that? *I gave*, saith he, *my heart to know wisdom*. He who made it his Option and Choice before all things; who so earnestly and so happily did pray for it; upon whom it is so expressly said, that God in a special manner, and plentiful measure did bestow it; who averreth God to be the sole Donour of it (for, *The Lord*, saith he, *giveth wisdom, out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding*) yet even he, did first give his Heart to it, before it was given into his Heart: He did not only gape for it to receive it by mere Infusion; but he worked and studied hard for it. He was indeed a great Student, an inquisitive Searcher into Nature, a curious Observer of the World, a profound Considerer and Comparer of things; and by that industrious Course, promoted by Divine Blessing, he did arrive to that great Stock of so renowned a Wisdom.

And the same Method it is which he prescribeth to us for getting it; exhorting us, that we *incline our ear unto wisdom, and apply our heart to understand* it.

* Οὐδὲ γὰρ ἡ τοῦ τα καλὰ ἔργα ἀνθρώπων ἐν γὰρ ἐκείνῃ δὴ ἀνθρώπων βοηθείας τελεωθήσεται. ἐδὲ ἡ ἀνθρώπων χάρις ὅτι ἡ μὴ
 παροξύνει τοὺς ἀνθρώπους, ἀλλ' ἐκότερα συγκεκεῖται ποροῖται, ἀποδίδωται ἀνθρώπινῳ, καὶ τὴν διὰ πίστεως ἀνθρώπων κατὰ
 τοῦ συμμαχίαν εἰς τελεωσὶν ἀρετῆς. *Bal. Conf. Mon. cap. 15.* Indeed

• Indeed the very Nature and Essence of Virtue doth consist in the most difficult and painful Efforts of Soul; in the extirpating rooted Prejudices and Notions from our Understanding; in bending a stiff Will, and rectifying crooked Inclinations; in over-ruling a rebellious Temper; in curbing eager and importunate Appetites; in taming wild Passions; in withstanding violent Temptations; in surmounting many Difficulties, and sustaining many Troubles; in struggling with various unruly Lusts within, and encountering many stout Enemies abroad, which assault our reason, and *war against our soul*: In such Exercises its very Being lieth; its Birth, its Growth, its Subsistence dependeth on them; so that from any Discontinuance or Remission of them it would soon decay, languish away, and perish.

What Attention, what Circumspection, and Vigilancy of Mind, what Intention of Spirit, what force of Resolution, what Command and Care over our selves doth it require, to keep our Hearts from vain Thoughts, and evil Desires; to guard our Tongue from wanton, unjust, uncharitable Discourse; to order our Steps uprightly and steadily in all the Paths of Duty? *ὅτι ἐκ ἐπίπονον ἔστι ἀρετὴς; and what (as St. Chrysostome asketh) of all things belonging to virtue is not laborious?* It is no small Task to know it, wherein it consisteth, and what is demanded of us; it is a far more painful thing to conform our Practice unto its Rules and Dictates. Chryl. in Joh. Or. 36.

If travelling in a rough Way; if climbing up a steep Hill; if combating stern Foes, and fighting sharp Battles; if crossing the Grain of our Nature and Desires; if continually holding a strict Rein over all our Parts and Powers, be things of Labour and Trouble, then greatly such is the Practice of Virtue.

Τῆς ἀρετῆς ἰσθῶτα θεοὶ περπαροῦσιν ἐν
θνηται
Ἀθάνατοι, μακρότερον ὅσον οἱ μὲν
ἐπ' αὐτῷ,
καὶ τρηχύς

Heb. ἐργ. αἱ

Indeed each virtue hath its peculiar Difficulty, needing much Labour to master it: *Faith* is called *ἔργον πίστεως, the work of faith*; and it is no such easie Work, as may be imagined, to bring our Hearts into a thorough Perswasion about Truths crossing our sensual Conceits and controuling our peevish Humours; unto a perfect Submission of our Understanding, and Resignation of our Will to whatever God teacheth or prescribeth; to a firm Resolution of adhering to that Profession, which exacteth of us so much Pains, and exposeth us to so many Troubles. 1 Thes. 1. 3.
2 Thes. 1. 11.
John 6. 29.

Charity is also a laborious Exercise of many good Works, and he that will practise it, must in divers ways labour hardly; He must labour in voiding from his Soul many Dispositions deeply radicated therein by Nature, Opinion and Custom, (Envy, Frowardness, Stubbornness, perverse and vain Selfishness, from whence Wrath, Revenge, Spite and Malice do spring forth.) He must labour in effectual Performance of all good Offices, and in catching all Occasions of doing good; He must exert that *κόπον ἀγάπης, that labour of love*, whereof St. Paul doth speak; He must (as that holy Apostle directeth, not only in Precept, but by his own Practice) work with his own Hands, that he may supply the Wants of his Neighbour. Gal. 6. 10.
1 Thes. 1. 3.
Heb. 6. 10.
Eph. 4. 28.
Act. 20. 35.

Hope, it self (which one would think, when grounded well, should be a no less easie than pleasant Duty) doth need much Labour to preserve it safe, straight and stable, among the many Waves and Billows of Temptation assailing to shake and subvert it; whence a *patience of hope* is recommended to us; and we so often are exhorted to hold it fast, to keep it sure, firm and unshaken to the end. Ἀκλινῶς
Heb. 10. 23.
Heb. 6. 19.
1 Thes. 1. 3.
Heb. 10. 36.

Heb. 6. 11. Ἐνδεινυνδὺς σπασθῆναι.
Heb. 3. 6, 14. 2 Pet. 1. 10.

Πάντες ἐξ ἐνὸς σώματος ὁμιλοῦσιν ὡς
καὶ ἄλλοι μὴ ἡ σωφροσύνη, τε καὶ δικαιοσύνη.
χαλεπὸν μὲν τοι ὡς ἐπίπονον. Plat. d.
Rep. 2.

Temperance also surely demandeth no small Pains; it being no slight Business to check our greedy Appetites, to shun the Enticements of Pleasure, to escape the Snares of Company and Example, to support the Ill-Will and Reproaches of those Zealots and Bigots for Vice, who cannot tolerate any Non-conformity to their Extravagancies; but (as St. Peter doth express it) *think it strange, if others do not run with them to the same excess of riot, speaking ill of them for it.* 1 Pet. 4. 4.

What should I speak of *Meekness*, of *Patience*, of *Humility*, of *Contentedness*? Is it not manifest how laborious those Virtues are, and what Pains are necessary in the obtaining, in the Exercise of them? what Pains, I say, they require

require in the Voidance of fond Conceits, in the Suppression of froward Humours, in the quelling fierce Passions, in the brooking grievous Crosses and Adversities, in the bearing heinous Injuries and Affronts?

Thus doth all Virtue require much Industry, and it therefore necessarily must it self be a great Virtue, which is the Mother, the Nurse, the Guardian of all Virtues; yea, which indeed is an Ingredient and constitutive Part of every Virtue; for if Virtue were easily obtainable or practicable without a good measure of Pains, how could it be Virtue? what Excellency could it have, what Praise could it claim, what Reward could it expect? God hath indeed made the best things not easily obtainable, hath set them high out of our Reach; to exercise our Industry in getting them, that we might raise up our selves to them, that being obtained, they may the more deserve our Esteem, and his Reward.

Lastly, the Sovereign Good, the last Scope of our Actions, the Top and Sum of our Desires; *Happiness* it self; or *Eternal Life* in perfect Rest, Joy and Glory; although it be the supreme Gift of God, and special Boon of divine Grace (*τὸ δὲ χάρισμα τῆς Θεοῦ*, But, saith St. Paul, the gift of God's grace is eternal life) yet it also by God himself is declared to be the Result and Reward of Industry; for we are commanded to work out our salvation with fear and trembling, and to give diligence in making our calling and election sure, by virtuous Practice; and God (saith St. Paul) will render to every man according to his works, to them who by patient continuance in well-doing, seek glory, and honour, and immortality, eternal life; and, in the Close of God's Book, it is proclaimed, as a Truth of greatest Moment, and special Point of God's Will, *Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life.* It is plainly Industry, which climbeth the holy Mount; it is Industry which taketh the Kingdom of Heaven by force; it is Industry, which so runneth as to obtain the Prize, which so fighteth as to receive the Crown, which so watcheth as to secure our everlasting Interest to us.

Thus do the choicest good things, of which we are capable, spring from Industry, or depend upon it; and no considerable Good can be attained without it; thus all the Gifts of God are by it conveyed to us, or are rendred in effect beneficial to us; for the Gifts of Nature are but Capacities which it improveth; the Gifts of Fortune or Providence are but Instruments, which it imployeth to our Use; the Gifts of Grace are the Supports and Succours of it; and the very Gift of Glory is its Fruit and Recompence.

There are farther several other material Considerations, and weighty Motives to the Practice of this Duty, which Meditation hath suggested to me; but these, in regard to your Patience, must suffice at present; the other (together with an Application proper to our Condition and Calling) being reserved to another Occasion.

SERMON XIX.

Of INDUSTRY in general.

ECCLES. IX. 10.

Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might:

Industry, which the Divine Preacher in this Text recommendeth to us, is a Virtue of a very diffusive Nature and Influence; stretching it self through all our Affairs, and twisting it self with every Concern we have; so that no Business can be well managed, no Design accomplished, no Good obtained without it: It therefore behoveth us to conceive a high Opinion of it, and to enure our Souls to the Practice of it, upon all Occasions: In furtherance of which Purposes I formerly not long since, did propound several Motives and Inducements; and now proceeding on, shall represent divers other Considerations serviceable to the same End.

1. We may consider that Industry is productive of Ease it self, and preventive of Trouble: It was no less solidly, than acutely and smartly advised by the Philosopher Crates: *Whether (said he) labour be to be chosen, labour; or whether it be to be eschewed, labour, that thou mayst not labour; for by not labouring, labour is not escaped, but is rather pursued;* and St. Chrysostome doth upon the same Consideration urge Industry, because *Sloth (saith he) is wont to spoil us, and to yield us much pain;* No Man can cozen Nature, escaping the Labour to which he was born; but rather attempting it, will delude himself, then finding most, when he shunneth all Labour.

Ἐὶς αἰετὸν ὁ πόνος, πόνει ἢ τε φάκτον, πόνει, ἵνα μὴ ποιῇς· διὰ τοῦτο μὴ ποιεῖν εὐφραίνεται πόνος, πᾶς δ' ἐναντίω εὐδαιμονεῖται, Crates, Ep. 4.

Ἡ ἀργία διαφθείρει ἡμᾶς ὥστε, καὶ πολλὸν παρέχει τὸ πόνον. Chryf. in Joh. Orat. 36.

Sloth indeed doth affect Ease and Quiet, but by affecting them doth lose them; It hateth Labour and Trouble, but by hating them, doth incur them; It is a self-destroying Vice, not suffering those who cherish it, to be idle, but creating much Work, and multiplying Pains unto them; engaging them into divers Necessities and Streights, which they cannot support with Ease, and out of which without extream Trouble they cannot extricate themselves: Of this the Preacher doth afford us a plain Instance; *By much slothfulness (saith he) the building decayeth, and through idleness of the hands the house droppeth through;* A little Care taken at first about repairing the House, would have saved its Decay and Ruin; and consequently the vast Charge and Trouble, becoming needful to re-edifie it: And the like doth happen in most other Cases and Occurrences of Life: Idleness commonly doth let slip Opportunities and Advantages, which cannot with Ease be retrieved; it letteth things fall into a bad Case, out of which they can hardly be recovered.

The certain Consequences of it (Disgrace, Penury, want of Experience; disobliging and losing Friends, with all the like Mischiefs) cannot be supported without much Disquiet; and they disable a Man from redressing the Inconveniences into which he is plunged.

But Industry by a little voluntary Labour taken in due Place and Season, doth save much necessary Labour afterward, and by moderate Care doth prevent intolerable Distress; and the Fruits of it (Wealth, Reputation, Skill and Dexterity in Affairs, Friendships, all Advantages of Fortune) do enable a Man to pass his Life with great Ease, Comfort and Delight.

2. Industry doth beget Ease by procuring good Habits, and Facility of acting things expedient for us to do. By taking Pains to day we shall need less Pains to morrow; and by continuing the Exercise, within a while we shall need no

Pains at all, but perform the most difficult Tasks of Duty, or of Benefit to us with perfect Ease, yea commonly with great Pleasure. What sluggish People account hard and irksome (as to rise early, to hold close to Study, or Business, to bear some Hardship) will be natural and sweet; as proceeding from another Nature, raised in us by Use.

Industry doth breed Assurance and Courage, needful for the Undertaking and Prosecution of all necessary Business, or for the Performance of all Duties incumbent on us.

No Man can quite decline Business, or disengage himself from Duty, without infinite Damage and Mischief accruing to himself; but these an industrious Man (confiding in this efficacious Quality) will set upon with Alacrity, and dispatch with Facility, his Diligence voiding Obstacles and smoothing the way to him; whereas Idleness finding some Difficulties, and fancying more, soon dishearteneth, and causeth a Man to desist from Action, rather chusing to crouch under the Burthen, than by Endeavour to carry it through, to discharge himself thereof: Whence as to an Industrious Man things seeming difficult will prove easie, so to

a slothful Person the easiest things will appear impossible; according to Solomon's Observation: *The way (saith he) of * a slothful man is an hedge of thorns, but the way of the upright is made plain*; whereas a slothful Man, being apt to neglect his Obligations, is opposed to an upright Man, who hath a

conscionable Regard to them, and is willing to take Pains in the Discharge of them: So it is declared, that to the one the way is rough and thorny, to the other beaten and expedite.

* ἡγυ.

Prov. 15. 19.

* Ὅδοι ἀνεργῶν ἐσφαλμαίαι, αἱ δὲ τῶν ἀνδρείων τετραμυβαίαι.

Prov. 22. 13. 26. 13.

Προφασίζεσθαι ἢ λέγει ἀκνηρὸς, λέγων ἐν τῇ ὁδοῖς, ἐν τῇ πλῆλειαις φρονεῖ.

Οὐδὲν ἔτιως ἐστὶν βέλδιον, ὃ μὴ σφοδρὰ ἐὰν ἢ ἐπαχθὲς, ὃ πολλὸς δεικνύειν ἀκνηρῶν ὡς ἀπερὶ πτόνον ἢ ἡ δυσχερὲς ὃ μὴ λίαν εὐχολοῖ ἢ σπεδὴ ἢ ἡ περιθυμία. Chryl. Tom. 6. Or. p. 144.

Τὰ μὲν βέλδια τὴν ἀμελείαν φέρει, τὰ δὲ χαλεπὰ ἐπιμελείας ἀλλοτρίαι. Plut. de Educ.

And again, *The slothful man (saith he) doth say, there is a Lion without, I shall be slain in the streets*; he is very apt to conceit, or to pretend imaginary Difficulties and Hazards, and thence to be deterred from going about his Business, or doing his Duty.

This Consideration St. Chrysostome doth propose, exciting to an earnest Pursuit of Vertue; because *There is (saith he) nothing so easie which our great sloth doth not represent very grievous and burthensome; nothing so painful and difficult, which diligence and willingness do not shew to be very easie.*

3. We may consider that Industry will sweeten all our Enjoyments, and season them with a grateful Relish; for as no Man can well enjoy himself, or find sound Content in any thing, while Business or Duty lie unfinished on his Hand; so when he hath done his best toward the Dispatch of his Work, he will then comfortably take his Ease, and enjoy his Pleasure; then his Food doth taste favourily, then his Divertisements and Recreations have a lively Gustfulness, then his Sleep is very sound and pleasant, according to that of the Preacher, *The sleep of a labouring man is sweet.*

Ecclef. 5. 12.
Τὸ δὲ λυ.

4. Especially those Accommodations prove most delightful, which our Industry hath procured to us; we looking on them with a special Tendernefs of Affection, as on the Children of our Endeavour; we being sensible at what Costs of Care and Pain we did purchase them. If a Man getteth Wealth by Fraud or Violence, if he riseth to Preferment by Flattery, Detraction, or any bad Arts, he can never taste any good Savour, or find sound Comfort in them; And from what cometh merely by chance, as there is no Commendation due, so much Satisfaction will not arise: 'Tis the *Wise-man's* Observation, *The slothful man roasteth not that which he took in hunting*, and therefore it cannot be very grateful to him; but (addeth he) *the substance of a diligent man is precious*; that is, what a Man compasseth by honest Industry, that he is apt highly to prize; he triumphed in it, and (in St. Paul's Sense innocently) boasteth of it; he feelth a solid Pleasure, and a pure Complacency therein; the manner of getting it doth more please him than the thing it self; as true Hunters do love the Sport more than the Quarry, and generous

Cui sit conditio dulcis sine pulvere palmae?
Hor. Ep. l. 1.

Prov. 12. 27.

1 Cor. 9. 15.

Περὶ εὐαῖνα μάλλον ἢ ψυχὴ διακρίσθαι, ὡς ἂν ἔκαμε διὰ τὸ τοῦ πόνου ἀνέμειξεν ἀρετῇ δικαιώσαι αὐτὴν ταύτην. Ἐλάμβανον. Chryl. in Joh. Orat. 36.

Warriours more rejoice in the Victory than in the Spoil; For our soul (as St. Chrysostome discourseth) *is more affected with those things, for which it hath laboured; for which Reason (addeth he) God hath mix'd Labours with Vertue it self, that he might endear it to us.* Yea farther,

5. The

5. The very Exercise of Industry immediately in it self is delightful, and hath an innate Satisfaction which tempereth all Annoyances, and even ingratiateth the Pains going with it.

The very Settlement of our Mind on fit Objects, or its Acquiescence in determinate Action, conducing to a good End, whereby we are freed of Doubt, Distraction, and fastidious Listlessness, doth minister Content.

The Reflexion upon our having embraced a wise Choice, our Proceeding in a fair Way, our being in chace of a good Purpose, doth breed Complacency.

To consider that we are spending our time accomptably, and improving our Talents to good Advantage (to the Service of God, the Benefit of our Neighbour, the bettering of our own State) is very chearing and comfortable.

And whereas *In all Labour* (as the *Wise-man* telleth us) *there is profit*, the Foresight Prov. 14. 23. of that Profit affordeth Pleasure, the foretasting the good Fruits of our Industry is very delicious.

Hope indeed doth ever wait on Industry: And what is more delightful than Hope? This is the Incentive, the Support, the Condiment of all honest Labour; in Virtue whereof the Husbandman toileth, the Merchant trudgeth, the Scholar ploddeth, the Soldier dareth with Alacrity and Courage, not resenting any Pains, not regarding any Hazards which attend their Undertakings: This the holy *Apostles* tell us did enable them with Joy to sustain all their painful Work, and hazardous Warfare; enjoining us also as to *work with fear*, so to *rejoice in hope*.

1 Cor. 9. 10.
—*ipsa operis difficultate latus spem segetis de labore metitur*, Apud Aug. Ep. 142.
Rom. 12. 12. 5. 2. Heb. 3. 6.
1 Tim. 4. 10. Col. 1. 5.
2 Cor. 3. 12. 1 John 3. 3.
Pet. 1. 3. Tit. 2. 13.

In fine, Industry doth free us from great Displeasure, by redeeming us from the Molestations of Idleness, which is the most tedious and irksome thing in the World, racking our Soul with anxious Suspense, and perplexing Distraction; starving it for want of satisfactory Entertainment, or causing it to feed on its own Heart by doleful Considerations; infesting it with Crowds of frivolous melancholick, troublesome stinging Thoughts; galling it with a Sense of our squandering away precious time, of our slipping fair Opportunities, of our not using the Abilities and Advantages granted us, to any Profit or Fruit: Whence St. Chrysostome saith very truly, that *there is nothing more unpleasant, more painful, more miserable than a Man that hath nothing to do*: Is not this (saith he) worse than ten thousand Chains, to hang in suspense, and be continually gaping, looking on those who are present? Indeed the strictest Imprisonment is far more tolerable, than being under Restraint by a lazy Humour from profitable Employment: This chaineth a Man hand and foot, with more than Iron Fetters: This is beyond any Imprisonment; It is the very Entombment of a Man, quite in Effect sequestering him from the World, or debarring him from any valuable Concerns therein. And if Liberty be *θεωσία αὐτοπραγίας*, a power of doing what one liketh best; then is he, who by his Sloth is disabled from doing any thing wherein he can find any reasonable Satisfaction, the veriest Slave that can be; from which Slavery Industry freeing us, and disposing us to perform chearfully whatever is convenient, thereby doeth us a great Pleasure. Farther,

Otio qui nescit uti plus habet negotii,
&c.
Otioso in otio animus nescit quid quidem velit, &c. Ennius apud Agel. 19. 10.

Καὶ τὸ ἀνδύεσθαι γένει· ἂν ἀνθρώπου
ἰδὲν ἔχοντα ποιεῖν; τί μοχθηρότερον;
τί ταλαιπωρότερον; μολών ἐχέρον τέ-
το δεσμῶν, χασμάδ' ἢ κεχλωμέναι δια-
παλὸς ἐπὶ τῇ ἀγορῇ καθήμενον, δρῶντα
τὸς παρόντας; Chryl. in Act. Or. 35.

6. Let us consider, that Industry doth afford a lasting Comfort, deposited in the Memory and Conscience of him that practiseth it. It will ever, upon his reviewing the Passages of his Life, be sweet to him to behold in them Testimonies and Monuments of his Diligence; it will please him to consider, that he hath lived to purpose, having done somewhat considerable! that he hath made an advantageous Use of his time; that he hath well husbanded the Talents committed to him; that he hath accomplish'd (in some measure) the Intents of God's Bounty, and made some Return for his excellent Gifts. What Comfort indeed can any Man have, yea, how sore Remorse must he feel in reflecting upon a Life spent in unfruitful and unprofitable Idleness? How can he otherwise than bewail his Folly and Baseness in having lived (or rather having only been) in vain; as the Shadow and Appearance of a Man; in having lavished his Days, in having buried his Talents, in having imbezzled his Faculties of Nature, and his Advantages from Providence; in having defeated the good Will of God, and endeavour'd no Requital to the munificent Goodness of his Maker, of his Preserver, his benign

Diu fuit, non diu vixit.

Matth 25. 26.

Lord and Master, his gracious Saviour and Redeemer? How, without Confusion, can he in his Mind revolve, that he hath no-wise benefited the World, and profited his Neighbour, or obliged his Friends, or rendred to his Country (to the Society, or Community of which he is a Member) Amends for all the Safety and Quiet, the Support, the Convenience, and the Pleasure he hath enjoyed under its Protection, and in its Bosom? that he hath not born a competent Share in the common Burthens, or paid a due Contribution of his Care and Labour to the publick Welfare? How can such a Man look inward upon himself with a favourable Eye, or pardon himself for so loathsome Defaults?

7. Let us consider, that Industry doth argue a generous and ingenuous Com-
pletion of Soul.

It implieth a Mind not content with mean and vulgar things (such as Nature dealeth to all, or Fortune scattereth about) but aspiring to things of high Worth, and pursuing them in a brave Way, with adventurous Courage, by its own Forces, through Difficulties and Obstacles.

It signifieth in a Man a Heart, not enduring to owe the Sustenance or Convenience of his Life to the Labour or the Liberality of others; to pilfer a Livelihood from the World; to reap the Benefit of other Mens Care and Toil, without rendering a full Compensation, or out-doing his private Obligations by considerable Service and Beneficence to the Publick.

A noble Heart will disdain to subsist like a Drone upon the Hony gathered by others Labour; like a Vermin to filch its Food out of the publick Granary; or like a Shark to prey on the lesser Fry; but will one way or other earn his Subsistence: For he that doth not earn, can hardly own his Bread, as St. Paul implieth, when he saith, *Them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own Bread.*

2 Theff. 3. 12.
Τὸν ἐαυτῶν
ἀγῶνα.

1 Cor. 9. 15.

2 Theff. 3. 9.

1 Cor. 9. 11.

1 Theff. 2. 6.

Acts 20. 34.

35. 18. 3.

1 Theff. 2. 9.

2 Theff. 3. 8.

1 Cor. 4. 12.

2 Cor. 11. 9.

2 Cor. 11. 23.

Prov. 31. 13.

14. 27.

Of this generous Ingenuity we have a notable Instance in that great Apostle himself; which he doth often represent as a Pattern to us, professing much Complacence therein; He with all Right and Reason might have challenged a comfortable Subsistence from his Disciples, in recompence for the incomparable Benefits he did confer on them, and of the excessive Pains he did endure for their Good; this he knew well, but yet did rather chuse to support himself by his own Labour, than any wise to seem burthensome or troublesome to them: *These Hands* (said he) *have ministred to my necessities, and to them that are with me; I have shewed you all things, that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of our Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.* This was the Practice of him, who was in Labours most abundant; and such is the Genius of every Man, who upon Principles of Conscience, Reason and Honour, is industrious. Of him it may be said, as of Solomon's good House-wife, *She seeketh wool and flax, and worketh willingly with her hands; she is like the merchant's ship, she bringeth her food from afar; she looketh well to her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness.*

Sloth is a base Quality, the Argument of a Mind wretchedly degenerate and mean; which is content to grovel in a despicable State; which aimeth at no worthy thing, nor pursueth any thing in a laudable way; which disposeth a Man to live *gratis* (precariously) and ingratfully on the publick Stock, as an insignificant Cypher among Men, as a Burthen of the Earth, as a Wen of any Society; sucking Aliment from it, but yielding no Benefit or Ornament thereto.

8. Industry is a Fence to Innocence and Vertue; a Bar to all kind of Sin and Vice, guarding the Avenues of our Heart, keeping off the Occasions and Temptations to vicious Practice. When a Man is engaged in honest Employment, and seriously intent thereon, his Mind is prepossessed and filled, so that there is no room or vacancy for ill Thoughts, or base Designs to creep in; his Senses do not

Semper te diabolus inveniat occupatum.
Bern. form. hom. v. cap. 7.

Operans monachus uno demone pulsatur, otiosus vero innumeris Spiritibus devastatur, Cass. de Instit. 10. 23.

Ovid. de
Remed.

lie open to ensnaring Objects; he wants Leisure and Opportunity of granting Audience to the Sollicitations of sinful Pleasure; and is apt to answer them with a *non vacat*; the Devil can hardly find Advantage of tempting him, at least many Devils cannot get Access to him, according to that Observation in Cassian, *A working Monk is assaulted by one Devil, but an idle one is spoiled by numberless bad Spirits.* The Case of Men ordinarily is like that to that of *Aegythus*;

—ne nil ageretur, amavit,

rather

rather than do nothing, he was ready to do ill ; he not having Business to employ his Thoughts, wanton Desires did insinuate themselves into his Heart, and transported him to that disastrous Wickedness, which supplied Matter to so many Tragedies : And the like Instance the *Sacred History* suggested in King David, ^{2 Sam. 11. 2.} who walking ('tis said) on the roof of his house, his Mind then roving, and being untacked from honest Cares, that Temptation seized on him, whereby he was plunged into that woful Misdemeanour, which did create to him so much Sorrow, did make such a Spot in his Life, and leave such a Blur on his Memory, whence yet we may draw some Benefit, taking it as a profitable Document and Warning, how Idleness doth expose the best Men to Danger.

Idleness is indeed the Nursery of Sins, which as naturally grow up therein as Weeds in a neglected Field, or Insects in a standing Puddle ; *Idleness teacheth much evil.* It is the general Trap, whereby every Tempter assayeth to catch our Soul : For the Mind being loose from Care, Satan is ready to step in with his Suggestions, the World presenteth its Allurements, fleshly Desires rise up ; proud, froward, wanton Cogitations slip in ; ill Company doth entice, ill Example is regarded, every Temptation doth object and impress it self with great Advantage and Force ; Men in such a case being apt to close and comply with Temptations, even to divert their Minds, and entertain themselves, to cure their Listlessness, to pass their time, committing Sin for want of better Occupation. Hence in Places, where there is least Work, the worst Sins do most prevail ; and Idleness therefore was by the Prophet reckoned one of the three great Sins of Sodom, Parents of the rest : Behold (saith Ezekiel) this was the iniquity of thy Sister Sodom ; pride, ^{Ezek. 16. 49.} fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her : Hence it seldom doth happen in any way of Life, that a Sluggard and a Rake-hell do not go together, or that he who is idle, is not also dissolute.

9. Particularly Industry doth prevent the Sins of vain Curiosity, Pragmaticalness, troublesome Impertinency, and the like Pests of common Life, into which, Persons not diligently following their own Business, will assuredly fall. We hear

(saith St. Paul to the Thessalonians) that there are some who walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busse-bodies ; 'tis no wonder, if they did not work at all, that they should walk disorderly ; or that quite neglecting their own Concerns, they

— si non [stis,
Intendes animum studiis, & rebus bone-
Invidia vel amore vigil torquere—
Hor. Ep. 1. 2.

2 Theff. 3. 11.
Μὴ ἐν ἥπαισιν, ἀλλὰ ἐργα-
ζομένους : Working nothing, but over-
working.

should *περὲργάζεσθαι*, overwork, or be too busie in matters not belonging to them, intruding themselves into the Affairs of their Neighbours : For there is a natural Connexion between these things, since every Man must be thinking, must be doing, must be saying somewhat, to spend his Leisure, to uphold Conversation, to please himself, and gratifie others, to appear somebody among his Companions : to avoid the Shame of being quite out of Employment : Wherefore not having the Heart to mind his own Affairs, he will take the Boldness to meddle with the Concerns of other Men : If he cannot have the Substance, he will set up an Idol of Business, and seem very active in his Impertinency. In order thereto, being curiously inquisitive, and prying into the Discourse, Actions and Affairs of all Men. This Men are apt to do in their own Defence : And besides, Idleness doth put Men into a loose, garish, wanton Humour, disposing them without Heed or Regard to meddle with any thing, to prattle at any rate. In fine, whoever hath no Work at home, will be gadding to seek Entertainment abroad, like those Gossips of whom St. Paul saith, They learn to be idle, wandring about from house to house ; ^{1 Tim. 5. 3.} and not only idle, but tattlers also, and busie bodies, speaking things which they ought not : If indeed we consider, all the frivolous and petulant Discourse, the impertinent Chatting, the rash Censures, the spiteful Detractions which are so rife in the World, and so much poison all Conversation, we shall find the main Root of them to be a want of Industry in Men, or of diligent Attendance on their own Matters ; which would so much take up their Spirit and Time, that they would have little Heart or Leisure to search into, or comment upon other Men's Actions and Concerns.

10. Let us consider that Industry is needful in every Condition and Station, in every Calling and Way of Life ; in all Relations, for our good Behaviour, and right Discharge of our Duty in them. Without it we cannot in any state act decently, or usefully, either to the Benefit and Satisfaction of others, or to our own Advantage and Comfort.

Are

Are we rich ? Then is Industry requisite for keeping and securing our Wealth, for managing it wisely, for employing it to its proper Uses, and best Advantages, (in the Service of God, in Beneficence to our Neighbour, in advancing publick Good) so that we may render a good Accompt to him who hath entrusted us with the Stewardship thereof : Industry is very needful to guard us from the Temptations and Mischiefs to which Wealth doth expose us, that it do not prove a treacherous Snare, an unwieldy Burthen, a destructive Poison and Plague to us, throwing us into Pride and Vanity, into Luxury, into Stupidity, into distracting Solicitude, into a base wordly and earthly Temper of Heart, into a prophane Oblivion of God, and of our own Souls.

Vitreæ famâ,
Hor.
Eccl. 10. 1.

Are we in conspicuous Rank of Dignity, or in Honour and Repute among Men ? Then is Industry requisite to keep us fast in that State, to hold us from tumbling from that Pinnacle down into extream Disgrace ; for then all Eyes are upon us, strictly observing what we do, and ready to pass Censure on our Actions ; so that great Diligence is necessary to approve our selves, and shun Obloquy. Nothing is more brittle than Honour, every little thing hitting on it, is able to break it, and therefore without exceeding Care we cannot preserve it ; Nothing is more variable or fickle than the Opinions of Men (wherein Honour consisteth) it is therefore no easie matter to fix or detain them in the same Place.

Honour cannot live without Food or Fuel ; it must be nourished by worthy Actions ; without a continual Supply of them, it will decay, languish, and pine away : Industry therefore is required to keep it ; and no less is necessary to use it well, in a due Subordination to God's Honour, and Reference to his Service, that instead of an Ornament and Convenience, it do not prove a baneful Mischief to us ; puffing up our Minds with vain Conceits and Complacencies, inclining us to Arrogance and Contempt of others, tempting us by assuming to our selves to rob God of his due Glory ; to decline which Evils great Care is requisite ; we must have a steady Balast, and we must hold the Rudder warily, when we carry so great Sail.

On the other hand, are we poor and low in the World ; or do we lie under Disgrace ? Then do we much need Industry to shun Extremities of Want and Ignominy ; that we be not swallow'd up and overwhelm'd by Need or Contempt ; to support us under our Pressures, to keep up our Spirits from Dejection and Disconsolateness ; to preserve us from impious Discontentedness and Impatience : Industry is the only Remedy of that Condition, enabling us to get out of it, retrieving a Competence of Wealth or Credit ; or disposing us to bear it handsomely, and with Comfort ; so as not to become forlorn or abject Wretches.

It is so needful to every Condition ; and it is so for all Vocations ; for,

Is a Man a Governour, or a Superiour in any Capacity ? Then what is he but a publick Servant doom'd to continual Labour, hired for the Wages of Respect and Pomp, to wait on his People ; in providing for their Needs, protecting their Safety, preserving their Peace and Welfare ; where is he but on a Stage, whereon he cannot well act his Part, without vigilant Attendance to his Charge, and constant Activity in performing all the Functions thereof ? He is engag'd in great Obligations and Necessities of using extream Diligence, both in regard to himself and others. *Homer's Description of a Prince is a good one ; One who hath much People, and many Cares committed to him :*

Ὁ λαὸς τ' ἐπιτετραφέναι, καὶ πόσα μέμνηε.

He must watchfully look to his own Steps, who is to guide others by his Authority and his Example. All his Actions require special Conduct, not only his own Credit and Interest, but the common Welfare depending thereon. He must heedfully advise what to do, he must diligently execute what he resolveth on. He hath the most ticklish things that can be (the Rights and Interests, the Opinions and Humours of Men) to manage. He hath his own Affections to curb and guide, that they be not perverted by any sinister Respects, not swayed by any unjust Partiality, not corrupted by Flattery or Fear. He will find, that to wield Power innocently, to brandish the Sword of Justice discreetly and worthily, for the Maintenance of Right, and Encouragement of Vertue, for the Suppression of Injury, and Correction of Vice, is a Matter of no small Skill or slight Care.

Industry is indeed a Quality most proper for Persons of high Rank and Dignity, or of great Power and Authority ; who have special Opportunities to employ

ploy it in weighty Affairs to great Advantage ; whose Undertakings being of vast moment do need answerable Efforts to move and guide them : The Industry of a Mechanick, or a Rustick, acting in a low and narrow Sphere can effect no great Matter, and therefore it self need not to be great ; but the Industry of a Prince, of a Nobleman, of a Gentleman, may have a large and potent Influence, so as to render a Nation, a County, a Town, happy, prosperous, glorious, flourishing in Peace, in Plenty, in Vertue ; it therefore for atchieving such Purposes need be, and should be proportionably great ; a small Power not being able to move a great Weight, nor a weak Cause to produce a mighty Effect. Wherefore *Cicero* recommending *Pompey* for a publick Charge, doth reckon these to be the *Imperatoris Virtutes*, Qualities besitting a Prince, or General, wherein he did excel, *Labour in business, Valour in Dangers, Industry in acting, Nimbleness in Performance, Counsel in providing*.— And *Alexander the Great*, reflecting on his Friends degenerating into Sloth and Luxury, told them that *it was a most slavish thing to luxuriate, and a most royal thing to labour*.

Labor in negotio, fortitudo in periculis, industria in agendo, celeritas in conficiendo, consilium in providendo, &c. Cic. pro lege Manil.

Δεληκώτατον ἐστὶ τὸ πρῶτον, βασιλικώτατον δὲ ποιεῖν, Plut. in Alex. p. 1262.

And for those who move in a lower Orb of Subjection or Service, I need not shew how needful Industry is for them : Who knoweth not that to be a good Subject, doth exact a careful Regard to the Commands of Superiours, and a painful Diligence in observing them ? That to make a good Servant, Fidelity and Diligence must concur ? whereof the first doth suppose the last, it being a part of Honesty in a Servant to be diligent ; whence *δὲλε πονηρὸς καὶ ὀκνηρὸς, (1) thou Mat. 25. 25* wicked and slothful Servant, were in the Gospel well coupled ; and the first Epithet was grounded on the second, he being therefore wicked, because he had been slothful.

Neither can a Man be a true Friend, or a good Neighbour, or any-wise a good Relative, without Industry disposing him to undergo Pains in performing good Offices, whenever Need doth require, or Occasion invite.

In fine, it is palpable, that there is no Calling of any sort, from the Sceptre to the Spade, the Management whereof with any good Success, any Credit, any Satisfaction, doth not demand much Work of the Head, or of the Hand, or of both.

If Wit or Wisdom be the Head, if Honesty be the Heart, Industry is the Right Hand of every Vocation ; without which the shrewdest Insight and the best Intention can execute nothing.

A Sluggard is qualified for no Office, no Calling, no Station among Men, he is a mere No-body ; taking up room, pestering and clogging the World.

11. It also may deserve our Consideration, that it is Industry, whereto the publick State of the World, and of each Commonweal therein is indebted for its being, in all Conveniencies and Embellishments belonging to Life, advanced above rude and sordid Barbarism ; yea whereto Mankind doth owe all that good Learning, that Morality, those Improvements of Soul, which elevate us beyond Brutes.

To industrious Study is to be ascribed the Invention and Perfection of all those Arts whereby human Life is civiliz'd, and the World cultivated with numberless Accommodations, Ornaments and Beauties.

All the comely, the stately, the pleasant, and useful Works, which we do view with Delight, or enjoy with Comfort, Industry did contrive them, Industry did frame them.

Industry reared those magnificent Fabricks, and those commodious Houses ; it formed those goodly Pictures and Statues ; it raised those convenient Causeys, those Bridges, those Aqueducts ; it planted those fine Gardens with various Flowers and Fruits ; it clothed those pleasant Fields with Corn and Grass ; it built those Ships, whereby we plough the Seas, reaping the Commodities of foreign Regions. It hath subjected all Creatures to our Command and Service, enabling us to subdue the fiercest, to catch the wildest, to render the gentler sort most tractable and useful to us. It taught us from the Wool of the Sheep, from the Hair of the Goat, from the Labours of the Silk-worm, to weave us Cloaths to keep us warm, to make us fine and gay. It helpeth us from the inmost Bowels of the Earth to fetch divers needful Tools and Utensils.

It collected Mankind into Cities, and compacted them into orderly Societies, and devised wholesome Laws under shelter whereof we enjoy Safety and Peace, Wealth and Plenty, mutual Succour and Defence, sweet Conversation and beneficial Commerce.

Ut varias usus meditando. extunderet
artes
Paulatim; &c.

Vir. Georg. I.

It by Meditation did invent all those Sciences whereby our Minds are enriched and enabled, our Manners are refined and polished, our Curiosity is satisfied, our Life is benefited.

What is there, which we admire, or wherein we delight, that pleaseth our Mind, or gratifieth our Sense, for the which we are not beholden to Industry?

Doth any Country flourish in Wealth, in Grandeur, in Prosperity? It must be imputed to Industry, to the Industry of its Governours settling good Order, to the Industry of its People following profitable Occupations: So did *Cato*, in that notable *Oration* of his in *Sallust*, tell the *Roman* Senate, that it was not by the Force of their Arms, but by the Industry of their Ancestors that Commonwealth did arise to such a Pitch of Greatness. When Sloth creepeth in, then all things corrupt and decay; then the publick State doth sink into Disorder, Penury, and a disgraceful Condition.

Cat. apud Sal.
in bello Catil.

12. Industry is commended to us by all sorts of Example, deserving our Regard and Imitation. All Nature is a Copy thereof, and the whole World a Glass, wherein we may behold this Duty represented to us.

We may easily observe every Creature about us incessantly working toward the End for which it was designed, indefatigably exercising the Powers with which it is endued; diligently observing the Laws of its Creation. Even Beings void of Reason, of Sense, of Life it self, do suggest unto us Resemblances of Industry; they being set in continual Action toward the effecting reasonable Purposes, conducing to the Preservation of their own Beings, or to the Furtherance of common Good.

The Heavens do rowl about with unwearied Motion, the Sun and Stars do perpetually dart their Influence; the Earth is ever labouring in the Birth and Nourishment of Plants: the Plants are drawing Sap, and sprouting out Fruits and Seeds (to feed us, and propagate themselves,) the Rivers are running, the Seas are tossing, the Winds are blustering, to keep the Elements sweet in which we live.

Prov. 6. 6.

Solomon sendeth us to the *Ant*, and biddeth us to consider her ways (which provideth her meat in the summer, and gathered her food in the harvest) many such Instrumētars we may find in Nature; the like industrious Providence we may observe in every living Creature; we may see this running about, that swimming, another flying in Purveyance of its Food and Support.

If we look up higher to rational and intelligent Natures, still more noble and apposite Patterns do object themselves to us.

Here below every Field, every Shop, every Street, the Hall, the Exchange, the Court it self (all full of Business, and fraught with the Fruits of Industry) do mind us how necessary Industry is to us.

2 Cor. 11. 27.

If we consult History, we shall there find, that the best Men have been most industrious; that all great Persons, renown'd for heroical Goodness (the worthy *Patriarchs*, the holy *Prophets*, the blessed *Apostles*) were for this most commendable, that neglecting their private Ease, they did undertake difficult Enterprizes, they did undergo painful Labours for the Benefit of Mankind, they did pass their Days, like *St. Paul*, ἐν κόποις καὶ μόχθοις, in labours and toilsome pains for those Purposes.

Acts 10.

Our great Example, the Life of our blessed Lord himself, what was it but one continual Exercise of Labour? His Mind did ever stand bent in careful Attention, studying to do good. His Body was ever moving in wearisome Travel to the same Divine Intent.

Σὺ δὲ θρόνον
πυρρῆνι παρ-
εἶπον πολὺμο-
χθοι Ἀγγελ-
λοι. Orph.

If we yet soar farther in our Meditation to the superiour Regions, we shall there find the blessed Inhabitants of Heaven, the Courtiers and Ministers of God, very busie and active; They do vigilantly wait on God's Throne in Readiness to receive and to dispatch his Commands; they are ever on the Wing, and fly about like Lightning to do his pleasure. They are attentive to our Needs, and ever ready to protect, to assist, to relieve us. Especially, they are diligent Guardians, and

Suc-

Succourers of good Men; *officious spirits, sent forth to minister for the heirs of sal.* Pfal. 34. 8.
vation; so even the Seat of perfect Rest is no Place of Idleness. 91. 11.

Yea, God himself, although immoveably and infinitely happy, is yet immensely careful, and everlastingly busie: He rested once from that great Work of Creation; but yet *my father* (saith our Lord) *worketh still*; and he never will rest from his Works of Providence, and of Grace. His Eyes continue watchful over the World, and his Hands stretched out in upholding it. He hath a singular Regard to every Creature, supplying the Needs of each, and *satisfying the desires of all.* 103. 21, 22.
 Heb. 1. 14.

Gen. 2. 2. John 5. 27.

Pfal. 121. 3. 127. 1. Zech. 4. 10.
 2 Chron. 16. 9.

O tu bone omnipotens, qui sic curas unumquemque nostrum tanquam solum cures, & sic omnes tanquam singulos.
 Aug. Conf. 4. 11.

And shall we alone be idle, while all things are busie? Shall we keep our Hands in our Bosom, or stretch our selves on our Beds of Laziness, while all the World about us is hard at work in pursuing the Designs of its Creation? Shall we be wanting to our selves, while so many things labour for our Benefit? Shall not such a Cloud of Examples stir us to some Industry, not to comply with so universal a Practice, to cross all the World, to disagree with every Creature, is it not very monstrous and extravagant?

I should close all this Discourse with that, at which, in pitching on this Subject I chiefly did aim, an Application exhortatory to our selves, urging the Practice of this Vertue by Considerations peculiar to us as Scholars, and derived from the Nature of our Calling; but the doing this, requiring a larger Discourse than the time now will allow of; I shall reserve it to another Occasion; adding only one Consideration more.

13. Lastly, if we consider, we shall find the Root and Source of all the Inconveniences, the Mischiefs, the Wants, of which we are so apt to complain, to be our Sloth; and that there is hardly any of them, which commonly we might not easily prevent or remove by Industry: Why is any Man a Beggar, why contemptible, why ignorant, why vicious, why miserable? Why, but for this one Reason, because he is slothful! because he will not labour to rid himself of those Evils? What could we want, if we would but take the Pains to seek it, either by our Industry, or by our Devotion? For where the first will not do, the second cannot fail to procure any good thing from him, who giveth to all men liberally, and hath promised to supply the Defect of our Ability by his free Bounty; so that if we join in these two Industries (industrious Action, and industrious Prayer) there is nothing in the World so good, or so great, of which, if we are capable, we may not assuredly become Masters: And even for Industry it self, especially in the Performance of all our Duties towards God, let us industriously pray: Even so, *The God of peace sanctifie us wholly; and make us perfect in every good work to do his will, working in us that which is well pleasing in his sight; through our blessed Saviour Jesus Christ, to whom for ever be all glory and praise.* AMEN.

Pfal. 145. 15.
 16.

Prov. 5. 21.
 15. 3.

Pfal. 34. 15.
 Gen. 31. 49.
 Jer. 31. 18.

Jac. 1. 5.

Δείσις ἐνερ-
 γουμένη.

Jam. 5. 16.

Προκαρτε-
 ρησις.

Eph. 6. 18.

Rom. 12. 12.

Col. 4. 2.

1 Thess. 5. 23.

Heb. 13. 20.

S E R M O N XX.

Of INDUSTRY in our general Calling, as Christians.

R O M. XII. 11.

Not slothful in Business.

INDUSTRY is a very eminent Vertue, being an Ingredient (or the Parent) of all other Vertues, of constant use upon all Occasions, and having Influence upon all our Affairs.

Vol. III.

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For

Τῇ σπουδῇ μὴ
 ἀνυμεγλ.
Sollicitudine
non pigri.
 Vulg.

For it is in our Nature framed ; all our Powers of Soul and Body being fitted for it, tending to it, requiring it for their Preservation and Perfection.

We were designed for it in our first happy State ; and upon our Lapse thence were farther doomed to it, as the sole Remedy of our Needs and the Inconveniences to which we became exposed. For,

Without it we cannot well sustain or secure our Life in the Enjoyment of any Comfort or Convenience ; we must work to earn our Food, our Cloathing, our Shelter ; and to supply every Indigency of Accommodations, which our Nature doth crave.

To it God hath annexed the best and most desirable Rewards ; Success to our Undertakings, Wealth, Honour, Wisdom, Vertue, Salvation ; all which as they flow from God's Bounty, and depend on his Blessing ; so from them they are usually convey'd to us through our Industry, as the ordinary Channel and Instrument of attaining them.

It is requisite to us, even for procuring Ease, and preventing a Necessity of immoderate Labour.

It is in it self sweet and satisfactory ; as freeing our Mind from Distraction, and wrecking Irresolution ; as feeding us with good Hope, and yielding a Foretaste of its good Fruits.

It furnisheth us with Courage to attempt, and Resolution to atchieve things needful, worthy of us, and profitable to us.

It is attended with a good Conscience, and chearful Reflections of having well spent our time, and employ'd our Talents to good Advantage.

It sweeteneth our Enjoyments, and seasoneth our Attainments with a delightful Relish.

It is the Guard of Innocence, and barreth our Temptations to Vice, to Wantonness, to vain Curiosity and Pragmaticalness.

It argueth an ingenuous and generous Disposition of Soul ; aspiring to worthy things, and pursuing them in the fairest Way ; disdain'g to enjoy the common Benefits, or the Fruits of other Men's Labour without deserving them from the World, and requiting it for them.

It is necessary for every Condition and Station, for every Calling, for every Relation ; no Man without it being able to deport himself well in any State, to manage any Business, to discharge any sort of Duty.

To it the World is indebted for all the Culture, which advanceth it above rude and sordid Barbarism ; for whatever in common Life is stately, or comely, or useful, Industry hath contrived it, Industry hath composed and framed it.

It is recommended to us by all sort of Patterns considerable ; for all Nature is continually busie and active in Tendency toward its proper Designs ; Heaven and Earth do work in uncessant Motion ; every living Creature is employ'd in proggng for its Sustenance ; The blessed Spirits are always on the Wing in dispatching the Commands of God, and ministring Succour to us ; God himself is ever watchful, and ever busie in preserving the World, and providing for the Needs of every Creature.

The Lives of our *Blessed Saviour*, of all the *Patriarchs*, the *Prophets*, the *Apostles*, the *Saints* in this respect have been more exemplary ; no Vertue being more conspicuous in their Practice than Industry in performing the hard Duties, and painful Tasks imposed on them for the Service of God, and the Benefit of Mankind.

Such is the Vertue upon which I have formerly discoursed in general and at large, but shall now more specially consider, according to St. *Paul's* Prescription ; in reference to its most proper Matter, *Business*, explaining and pressing it accordingly.

Be not *slothful in business* (that is in discharge of it) or *to business* (that is to undertake it) this is the Rule ; the Nature and Needfulness whereof we shall declare.

By *οὐδὲν* (*Business*) we may understand any Object of our Care and Endeavours which doth require them, and may deserve them ; which by reason of its Difficulty cannot well be accomplished or attained without them ; and which is productive of some Fruit or Recompence answerable to them ; the which hath *opera causam*, a need of Labour, and *opera pretium*, some Effect worth our Pains ; if it be not such, it is not a due matter of vertuous and laudable Industry.

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There are many things, about which Men with great Earnestness employ themselves, called Business, but not deserving that Name : There are divers spurious kinds of Industry, which may not pretend to Commendation, but rather do merit Blame ; according to that of St. Chrysostom, *Labour which hath no Profit, cannot obtain any Praise.*

Πόνος ἐδὲν κέρδος ἔχων, ἐγκωμία πάντος ἀπεστέρηται. Chrysost. *Tom. 5. Orat. 64.*

There is a κενόσπουδα, a vain Industry, and a κακόςπουδα, a naughty Industry, both agreeing with genuine vertuous Industry in the Act, as implying careful and painful Activity, but discording from it in Object and Design ; and consequently in Worth, and moral Esteem.

Alind agere, to be impeminently busie, doing that which conduceth to no good purpose, is in some respect worse than to do nothing, or to forbear all Action ;

For 'tis a positive Abuse of our Faculties, and trifling with God's Gifts ; 'tis a throwing away Labour and Care, things valuable in themselves ; 'tis often a running out of the way, which is worse than standing still ; 'tis a debasing our Reason, and declining from our Manhood, nothing being more foolish or childish, than to be solicitous and serious about Trifles : For who are more busie and active than Children, who are fuller of Thoughts and Designs, or more eager in Prosecution of them than they ? But all is about ridiculous Toys, the Shadows of Business, suggested to them by Apish Curiosity, and Imitation. Of such Industry we may understand that of the Preacher, *The labour of the foolish wearieth every one of them* ; for that a Man soon will be weary of that Labour, which yieldeth no Profit, or beneficial Return.

"Αλλὰ ὅς ἐστι φιλοπόνος ἡ κενόσπουδος, οὐκ ἔστι ἐν τοῖς ἔργοις οὐδ' αὖτε περὶ αὐτῆς, ὡς εἰς ἀνθρώπων ποιεῖν, καὶ ἀδιαφόρως ἢ ἐνεκά τινος συμφερόντων καὶ λυσιτελεῖν, Plut. *de commun. not. p. 1949.*

Σπαδάζειν καὶ ποιεῖν παιδίας, χάριν ἡλίθιον φαίνεται καὶ λαν παιδικόν. Arist. *Eth. 10. 6.*

Ἡ ἐπὶ μικρῆς σπαδῆς μέμψιν φέρει. Plut. *ibid.*

Vid. de glori. Ath. p. 621.

Οἱ σπαδάζοντες ἐν τοῖς γέλοις, ἐν τοῖς σπαδαίοις ἐσθλὰ καὶ ἀγαθὰ. Cat. *Maj. apud Plut. in Aporh. Eccles. 10. 15.*

But there is another Industry worse than that, when Men are very busie in devising and compassing Mischiefs ; an Industry whereof the Devil affordeth a great Instance ; for the cursed Fiend is very diligent, ever watching for Occasions to supplant us, ever plotting *Methods* and Means to do harm, ever driving on his mischievous Designs with unwearied Activity ; *going to and fro in the earth ; running about as a roaring Lion*, looking for Prey, and *seeking whom he may devour.*

Luke 22. 31.

2 Cor. 2. 11.

Job 1. 7.

1 Pet. 5. 8.

And his wicked Brood are commonly like him, being *workers of Iniquity*, οἱ ποιοῦντες, *painful Men*, οἱ πανέργοι, Men that will do all things ; who will spare no Pains, nor leave any Stone unturned, for satisfying their Lusts, and accomplishing their bad Designs.

Ἔργοντες καὶ ἀδίκως.

Luke 13. 27.

Psal. 6. 8.

So indeed it is, that as no great Good, so neither can any great Mischief be effected without much Pains : And if we consider either the Characters or the Practices of those, who have been famous Mischief-doers, the Pests of Mankind, and Disturbers of the World, we shall find them to have been no Sluggards.

Catiline, Marius, Silico, Caesar, &c.

These two Sorts of vain and bad Industry the Prophet *Isaiah* seemeth to describe in those Words ; *They hatch cockatrice eggs, and weave the spiders web* ; of which Expressions one may denote mischievous, the other frivolous Diligence in Contrivance or Execution of naughty or vain Designs ; and to them both that of the Prophet *Hosea* may be referred ; *They have sowed the wind, and they shall reap the whirlwind* ; Guilt, Remorse, and Punishment being the Consequences of both. And of them both common Experience doth afford very frequent and obvious Instances, a great Part of Human Life being taken up with them. For,

Isa. 59. 9.

Hos. 8. 7.

Ecclesi. 34. 2.

Prov. 22. 8.

Hos. 10. 13.

How assiduously intent and eager may we observe Men to be at Sports ? How soon will they rise to go forth to them ? With what Constancy and Patience will they toil in them all the Day ? How indefatigable are they in riding or running about after a Dog or a Hawk, to catch a poor Beast or silly Bird ?

How long will Men sit poring on their Games, dispensing with their Food and Sleep for it ?

Συνεῖρασι καὶ οἱ φιλόκυβοι νύκτας ἡμέρας ἀσπῶσι καὶ ἀποιοῦσι καὶ ἡδονὴν περὶ αὐτῶν. Lib. *Orat. 31.*

How long and serious Attention will Men yield to a wanton Play ? How many Hours will they contentedly sit thereat ? What Study will Men employ on Jest and impertinent Wit ? How earnest will they be to satisfy their vain Curiosity ?

How in such Cases do Men forget what they are doing, that Sport should be Sport, not Work ; to divert and relax us, not to employ and busie us ; to take off our Minds a little, not wholly to take them up ; not to exhaust or tire our Spirits, but

τῷ δὲ ὄντι παύσονται καὶ πάλιν. Plut.

but to refresh and cheer them, that they may become more fit for grave and serious Occupations?

Jer. 2. 13. How painful will others be *in hewing them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that will hold no water*; that is, in immoderate Pursuit of worldly Designs? How studiously will they plod, how restlessly will they trudge, what Carking and Drudgery will they endure in driving on Projects of Ambition and Avarice? What will not they gladly do or suffer, to get a little Preferment, or a little Profit? It was a common Practice of old, and sure the World is not greatly mended since the *Psalmist* did thus reflect, *Surely every man walketh in a vain shew, surely they are disquieted in vain; he heapeth up riches, and cannot tell who shall gather them.* •

How many vigilant, and stout Pursuers are there of Sensuality, and riotous Excess; such as those of whom the Prophet speaketh, *Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning, that they may follow strong drink, that continue until Night, till wine inflame them?*

How busie (O Shame, O Misery! How fiercely busie) are some in accomplishing Designs of Malice and Revenge? How intent are some to over-reach, to circumvent, to supplant their Neighbour? How sore Pains will some take to seduce, corrupt or debauch others? How active will some be in sowing Strifes, in raising

^{Ἐνωχισμοὺς τινὰς ὁ διαλογὸς ἐπὶ τράζει,}
^{πῶς ἐπὶ πρῶτα, πῶς ἐμύχιστα, &c.}
Chryl. ἀνδρ. 16.

Factions, in fomenting Disorders in the World? How many industrious Slaves hath the Devil, who will spare no Pains about any kind of Work, which he putteth them to? How many like those of whom the *Wise-man* saith, *Their feet run*

Prov. 6. 8. *to evil, and are swift in running to mischief; they sleep not except they have done mischief, and their sleep is taken away, unless they cause some to fall.*

Now with all these Labourers we may well expostulate in the Words of the Prophet; *Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread, and your labour for that which satisfieth not?*

Such Labours are unworthy of Men, much less do they beſeem Christians.

It becometh us not as rational Creatures to employ the excellent Gifts of our Nature, and noble Faculties of our high-born Soul, the Forces of our Mind, the Advantages of our Fortune, our precious Time, our very Care and Labour vainly or unprofitably upon any thing base or mean; being that our Reason is capable of atchieving great and worthy things, we much debase it by stooping to regard Toys, we do extreemly abuse it by working Mischief.

Much more doth it misbecome us as Christians (that is, Persons devoted to so high a Calling, who have so worthy Employments assigned to us, so glorious Hopes, so rich Encouragements proposed to us for our Work) to spend our Thoughts and Endeavours on things impertinent to our great Design, or mainly thwarting it.

The proper Matter and Object of our Industry (those false ones being excluded) is true Business; or that which is incumbent on a Man to do, either in way of Duty, being required by God, or by Dictate of Reason, as conducing to some good Purpose; so that in Effect it will turn to accompt, and finally in Advantageous Return will pay him for his Labour of Mind or Body; that which the *Wise-man* did intend, when he advised, *Whatever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might; whatever thy Hand findeth, that is, whatever by Divine Appointment (by the Command or Providence of God) or which upon rational Deliberation, doth occur as Matter of our Action; comprizing every good Purpose and reasonable Undertaking incident to us.*

But our Business, according to the Holy *Apſtle's* Intent, may be supposed especially to be the Work of our Calling; to which each Man hath a peculiar Obligation; and which therefore is most properly his Business, or *ἡ ἀποστολή* emphatically, the *Business* allotted to him.

Now this Business, our Calling, is double; our general Calling, which is common to us all as Christians, and our particular Calling, which peculiarly belongeth to us, as placed in a certain Station, either in the Church or State. In both which Vocations that we are much obliged and concerned to be industrious, shall be now my Business to declare.

I. As to our general Calling (that *sublime*, that *heavenly*, that *holy* Vocation) in which by divine Grace, according to the Evangelical Dispensation, we are engaged, that necessarily requireth, and most highly deserveth from us a great measure of Industry; the Nature and Design of it requireth, the Fruit and Result of it deserveth our utmost Diligence; all Sloth is inconsistent with Discharging the Duties, with enjoying the Hopes, with obtaining the Benefits thereof. For,

It is a State of continual Work, and is expressed in Terms importing abundant, incessant, intense Care and Pain; for to be indeed Christians, *We must work out our salvation with fear and trembling*; We must *by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory and honour, and Immortality*. We must *walk worthy of the Lord to all well-pleasing, being fruitful in every good work*. We must *be rich in good works, and filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ to the praise and glory of God*. *We are God's workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them*.

We have a Soul to save, and are appointed, *εἰς περὶποιήσιν σωτηρίας*, to make an *Acquist of salvation*.

We have a Mind to improve with Vertue and Wisdom, qualifying us for Entrance into Heaven, for Enjoyment of God's Favour, for Conversation with Angels.

As Christians we are assumed to be Servants of God, and re-admitted into his Family, from which for our Disloyalty we had been discarded; so that as he was our natural Lord, so he is now such also by special Grace; who did make us, who doth maintain us, under whose Protection, and at whose Disposal we subsist; whence we are obliged to be faithfully diligent in his Service: we must constantly wait upon him in devotional Addresses; we must carefully study to know his Pleasure; we must endeavour exactly to perform his Will, and obey his Commands; we must strive to advance his Glory, to promote his Interest, to improve all Talents and Advantages committed to us for those Purposes; we must (as St. Paul expresseth it) *always abound in the work of the Lord*.

We must also look upon our selves as Servants of Christ our Redeemer; who by his Blood has purchased us to himself, that we might be *zealous of good works*; performing a Service to him, which consisteth in a faithful Discharge of manifold Duties; and in Pursuance of all Vertue; with most intent Application of Mind, with expedite Promptitude, with accurate Circumspection; *giving all diligence* (as St. Peter speaketh) in adding one Vertue to another; *being ready* (as St. Paul saith) *to every good work*; and *seeing that we walk circumspectly*, or behave our selves exactly according to the Rules of Duty in all our Conversation.

This Service requireth of us assiduous Attendance on Works of Piety and Devotion; that we do *incessantly watch to Prayers*, that we *always give thanks*, that we *continually do offer up the sacrifice of praise to God*.

It demandeth from us a continual labour of charity; that we *serve one another in love*; that we should, as we have opportunity, *work good to all men*, that we should *always pursue good toward one another, and toward all men*.

It obligeth us with all our powers to pursue peace with all men (which, considering our natural Peevishness, Pride, and Perverseness, is often no easie Task) and that we do *συνδύεσθαι*, studiously endeavour to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.

It chargeth on us contentedly and patiently to undergo whatever God doth impose of Burthen or Sufferance, so that *patience hath its perfect work*; and it is a crabbed Work to bend our stiff Inclinations, to quell our refractory Passions, to make our sturdy Humour buckle thereto.

It doth exact that we should govern and regulate according to very strict and severe Laws all the Faculties of our Soul, all the Members of our Body, all internal Motion, and all external Actions proceeding from us; that we should check our Inclinations, curb our Appetites, and compose our Passions; that we should guard our Hearts from vain Thoughts and bad Desires; that we should bridle our Tongues from

ἡμεῖς ἅλλοις. Phil. 3. 14.
καλῶς ἐπεσυνῶ. Heb. 3. 1.
ἀγαθὰ καλῶς. 1 Tim. 19.
Eph. 1. 18. 2 Theff. 1. 11.

Phil. 2. 12.

Rom. 2. 7.

Col. 1. 10.

1 Tim. 6. 18.

Phil. 1. 11.

John 15. 5.

8. 16.

Jam. 3. 17.

Eph. 2. 10.

1 Theff. 5. 9.

1 Theff. 1. 9.

Rom. 7. 6.

6. 22.

Eph. 2. 19.

Eph. 5. 10.

Rom. 12. 2.

Luke 11. 28.

Mat. 25. 27.

1 Cor. 15. 58.

Col. 3. 25.

Eph. 6. 7.

1 Cor. 7. 23.

6. 20.

Tit. 2. 14.

2 Pet. 1. 5. Σπεύτω πᾶσαν παρε-
σέγκαντες.

Tit. 3. 1.

Βλέπετε πῶς ἀκριβῶς—Eph. 5. 15.

Col. 4. 2. Eph. 6. 18. Rom. 12. 12.

1 Theff. 5. 17. Luke 18. 1.

1 Theff. 5. 18. Eph. 5. 20.

Cpl. 3. 17.

Heb. 13. 15.

1 Theff. 1. 3. Κόψου ἀγάπης.

Gal. 5. 13. ἀλλήλους.

Gal. 6. 10. ἐργάζομεθα.

1 Theff. 5. 15.

Rom. 12. 18.

Εἰ δυνατόν.

Heb. 12. 14.

2 Tim. 2. 22.

Eph. 4. 3.

Jam. 1. 4.

from evil and from idle Discourses ; that we should order our Steps in the streight Way of Righteousness, not deflecting to the Right Hand or to the Left.

In the Discharge of this Service how many rough Difficulties are there to be surmounted, how many great Obstacles to be removed, how many stout Oppositions to be encountered, how many potent Enemies to be vanquished, how many fore Hardships, Crosses and Tribulations to be endured ?

How shrewd a Task must we find it to circumscribe our Hearts, to mortify our Earthly Members, to crucify our Flesh with its Affections and Lusts, to pull out our right Eyes, and cut off our right Hands, to renounce our worldly Interests, to hate our nearest Relations, to take up and bear our Cross whenever Conscience and duty shall call us thereto ?

Our Calling therefore doth require great Industry ; and the Business of it consequently is well represented by those Performances, which demand the greatest Intention, and laborious Activity ; it is stiled *Exercise* (agonistick and ascetick

γυμναζε σεαυτον. 1 Tim. 4. 7.

Ἐν τῷ αἵματι. Acts 24. 16.

Heb. 12. 11.

Eph. 6. 12.

1 Cor. 9. 25.

Heb. 12. 1.

1 Cor. 9. 24.

Phil 3. 14.

2 Tim. 4. 7.

1 Tim. 1. 18.

6. 12.

2 Tim. 4. 7.

1 Cor. 9. 25.

1 Thess. 5. 6.

Mat. 26. 41.

1 Pet. 5. 8.

2 Tim. 2. 3.

Matth. 11. 12.

1 Cor. 16. 13.

Luke 12. 37.

Apo. 3. 2.

16. 15.

2 Tim. 2. 3.

Matth. 11. 12.

1 Cor. 16. 13.

Luke 12. 37.

Apo. 3. 2.

16. 15.

2 Tim. 2. 3.

Matth. 11. 12.

1 Cor. 16. 13.

Luke 12. 37.

Apo. 3. 2.

16. 15.

2 Tim. 2. 3.

Matth. 11. 12.

1 Cor. 16. 13.

Luke 12. 37.

Apo. 3. 2.

16. 15.

2 Tim. 2. 3.

Matth. 11. 12.

1 Cor. 16. 13.

Luke 12. 37.

Apo. 3. 2.

16. 15.

2 Tim. 2. 3.

Matth. 11. 12.

1 Cor. 16. 13.

Luke 12. 37.

Apo. 3. 2.

16. 15.

2 Tim. 2. 3.

Matth. 11. 12.

1 Cor. 16. 13.

Luke 12. 37.

Apo. 3. 2.

16. 15.

Exercise ; γυμναζε σεαυτον προς ευσοβειαν, *Exercise thy self to godliness* ; and εν τῷ αἵματι, *Herein I exercise my self to have always a conscience void of offence toward God and toward men ;*)

wrestling (ἡμῶν ἡ πάλη, *our wrestling is not (only) against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers ;*) running a race (Let us run with patience the race that is set

before us ; So run that ye may obtain : I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling.) A warfare, a combating (War a good warfare, holding faith and a good

Conscience ; fight the good fight ; thou therefore endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ : Every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things ;) offering

violence ; (The Kingdom of Heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force) watching (Let us not sleep as do others, but let us watch and be sober : Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong : watch and pray, that ye enter not

into temptation.)

Hence the Precepts importing the general Tenour of Christian Practice are usually couched in terms implying great Sedulity and Contention of the Soul ;

Ἀγωνίζεσθε, *Strive to enter in at the strait gate: Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest ; Labour not for the meat that perisheth, but for that meat which endureth to ever-*

lasting life. Give diligence to make your calling and election sure ; Gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end: Wherefore, brethren, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.

Such is the Work of our general Calling, and so much Industry it challengeth from us ; with great Reason indeed, for that such Work is needful to our Happiness, and that our Labour will certainly be rewarded therewith.

The Work indeed of it self is most worthy to employ us ; doth most become us, doth much adorn us, doth best besit our Divine Extraction and large Capacity ; is the noblest, the handsomest, the sweetest Employment that could take us up ;

but we have also the greatest Inducements and Encouragements possible for our Industry therein.

There are by the Divine Bounty and Mercy, Wages assigned abundantly correspondent to our Work, yea, infinitely surpassing it : there is πολὺς μισθός a great

(or a manifold) *hire* for our slender and simple Performances ; there are several noble Prizes highly worth our striving for with our utmost Strength and Contention of Soul.

In recompence thereof we shall assuredly gain even here in this transitory State the special Favour and Love of God, with his constant Protection and Care for our Good ; his faithful Direction, and friendly Assistance to guide us, and uphold us in all our Ways,

to bless and prosper our Undertakings, to supply us in our Needs, and comfort us in our Distresses ; so that we shall lack nothing that is good, that no evil shall happen to us, that all things shall concur and co-operate for our benefit.

We shall thereby taste the Satisfaction of a calm Mind, and a sound Conscience, quickened by the Consolations of the Divine Spirit ; the peace of God ruling in our hearts, which passeth all understanding.

We shall afterward, when this Moment is passed over, and our short Day's Work dispatched, receive from God's bountiful Hand an unconceivable Affluence of

Rom. 14. 18. *He that in these things serveth Christ, is acceptable to God, and approved of Men.*

Pf. 34. 9. 84. 11. 33. 19. 97. 3. 19.

Pfal. 91. 10. — Prov. 12. 21.

Rom. 8. 38.

Col. 3. 15.

Phil. 4. 7.

of good things, an eternal Permanence of Life; undisturbed Rest, *indefectible* Jam. 1. 12.
Wealth, ineffable Joy, incorruptible Glory, a *Kingdom unshakable*. 1 Pet. 5. 4.

He (saith our Lord) *that reapeth, receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life everlasting*. 1 Cor. 9. 25. John 4. 36.

To them (saith St. Paul) *who by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory, and honour, and immortality, God in recompence will bestow eternal life, And,*

I have (saith that blessed Labourer of himself) *fought the good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness*. Αποδοσει.— Rom. 2. 6. 2 Tim. 4. 8.

What more effectual Spur or Incentive can there be to Industry in this Business, than to consider that which St. Paul so often doth inculcate; *Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same* (a Recompence for the same) *he shall receive of the Lord*; and *knowing that* (in consideration of our Service done to the Lord) *of the Lord we shall receive the reward of the inheritance?* 2 Cor. 5. 10. Col. 3. 24.

What Exhortation can be more firmly grounded, or strongly backed, than is that of the Apostle, *Therefore, my brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord; forasmuch as ye know, that your labour is not in vain in the Lord*. 1 Cor. 15. 58.

May it not also much encourage us to Industry to be assured, that not only the kind of our Work, but the Degree of our Labour shall be considered and requited, in just Proportion; so that the harder we work, the higher we shall be rewarded; for, *to each one*, (saith our Lord) *the son of man shall render a reward* Αποδοσει ἐκαστῷ. *ἐκαστῷ*, according to his performance; Every one (saith St. Paul) *shall receive ἰδίον μισθόν καὶ ἰδίον ἔργον, his proper reward according to his proper work*; whence we have reason to observe St. John's Advice, *Look to your selves, that ye lose not those things which ye have gained, but that ye receive a full reward*. 1 Cor. 3. 8. Rev. 22. 12. 2. 23. Mat. 25. 21. Luke 19. 12. Μισθὸν πληρὸν ἀπολάβετε. 2 Joh. 8.

To be negligent or slothful in such a Case, for want of a little Care and Pains to forfeit such Advantages, what a Pity, what a Folly is it? Were an Opportunity presented, by a little minding our Business, and bestirring our selves, to procure a fair Estate, or a good Preferment, would not he be deemed mad or foolish, who would sit still, and forego that his Advantage? How much more Wildness is it to be drowsie and sluggish in this Case, thereby losing eternal Bliss and Glory? Well therefore might the Apostle say, *How shall we escape, if we neglect so great Salvation?* How shall we escape not only the Sin, and Guilt of base Ingratitude toward him that graciously doth offer it, but the Imputation of most wretched Folly, in being so much wanting to our own Interest and Welfare? Heb. 2. 3.

Is it not a sad thing, a woful Shame to observe, what Pains Men will throw away upon Things of small or no Concernment to them? Yea, what Toil and Drudgery will they sustain in the Service of Satan, in Pursuit of Sin, in the Gratification of their Vanities and Lusts.

What Pains will a covetous Wretch take in scraping for Pelf, how will he rack his Mind with carking Sollicitude to get, to keep, to spare it? How will he tire his Spirits with restless Travel? How will he pinch his Carcase for want of what Nature craveth? What Infamy and Obloquy will he endure for his niggardly Parsimony and Sordidness?

How much Labour will an ambitious Fop undergo for Preferment, or vain Honour? To how many tedious Attendances, to how pitiful Servilities will he submit? What fore Crosses and Disappointments will he swallow? What Affronts and Indignities will he patiently digest, without desisting from his Enterprize?

How will a Man (as St. Paul observed) *πάντα ἑγκρατέως*, endure all painful Abstinence and Continence, in order to the obtaining a *corruptible Crown*, a fading 1 Cor. 9. 25.
 • *Garland of Bays*, a Puff of vain Applause?

What Diligence will Men use to compass the Enjoyment of forbidden Pleasures; how watchful in catching Opportunities, how eager in quest of them will they be? What Difficulties will they undertake, what Hazards will they incur, what Damages and Inconveniencies will they sustain, rather than fail of satisfying their Desires?

What Atings of Head and Heart; what Pangs of Mind, and Gripes of Conscience, what Anxieties of Regret and Fear will every Worker of Iniquity undergo? So faithful Friends hath this vain and evil World; so diligent Servants hath

hath the accursed Lord thereof; so careful and laborious will Men be to destroy and damn themselves: O that we could be willing to spend as much Care and Pains in the Service of our God! O that we were as true Friends of our selves! O that we could be as industrious for our Salvation; that is, in the Business of our General Calling; which having considered, let us proceed to the other Business belonging to us, which is,

II. The Business of our particular Calling; that in reference whereto St. Paul doth prescribe, *Every man as the Lord hath called him, so let him walk. Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called*; let him so abide, as faithfully to prosecute the Work, and discharge the Duty of it; the doing which otherwise he termeth *πρᾶξεν τὴν ἰδίαν*, to do our own Business (working with our hands) and enjoineeth it in Opposition to those two great Pests of Life, Sloth and pragmatical Curiosity; or the Neglect of our own, and meddling with other Mens Affairs.

This the Apostle nameth *our Calling*, because we are called or appointed thereto by divine Providence; for he supposeth and taketh it for granted, that to each Man in this World God hath assigned a certain Station, unto which peculiar Action is futed; in which Station he biddeth him quietly to abide, till Providence fairly doth translate him, and during his Abode therein diligently to execute the Work thereof.

Every Man is a Member of a double Body; of the Civil Common-wealth, and of the Christian Church: In relation to the latter, whereof St. Paul telleth us (and what he saith by Parity of Reason may be referred likewise to the former) that *God hath set the members every one in the body, as it pleaseth him*; and as it is in the Natural, so it is in every Political and Spiritual Body, every Member hath its proper Use and Function; *All members* (saith St. Paul) *have not τὸ αὐτὸ πρᾶξιν, the same Office*, or the same Work and Operation; yet every one hath some Work. There is no Member designed to be idle or useles, conferring no Benefit to the whole; but *the whole body* (saith the Apostle) *fitly joined together, and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part maketh increase of the body, unto the edifying it self in love*; each Member doth conspire and co-operate to the Strength, Nourishment, Thriving and Welfare of the whole.

Every Man (who continueth a Man; in his Senses, or in any good Degree of natural Integrity) is by God endowed with competent Abilities to discharge some Function useful to common Good; or at least needful to his own Sustainance; to every one some Talent is committed, which in Subordination to God's Service he may improve, to the Benefit of the World, God's temporal, or of the Church, God's spiritual Kingdom.

It is plainly necessary, that the greatest Part of Men should have a determinate Work allotted to them, that they may support their Life and get their Food without being injurious, offensive, or burthensome to others; for their living they must either follow some Trade, or they must shark and filch, or they must beg, or they must starve.

And the rest are obliged to do somewhat, conducive to publick Good; that they may deserve to live; for a Drone should not be among the Bees; nor hath Right to devour the Honey: If any Man doth pretend, or presume that he hath nothing to do but to eat, to sleep, to play, to laugh; to enjoy his Ease, his Pleasure, his Humour, he thereby doth as it were disclaim a reasonable Title of living among Men, and sharing in the Fruits of their Industry; he in St. Paul's Judgment should be debarred of Food, for *this* (saith the Holy Apostle) *we commanded you, that if any man would not work, neither should he eat*.

Such an one in the Body of Men, what is he but an unnatural Excrescence, sucking Nutriment from it, without yielding Ornament or Use? What is he but a Wen deforming and encumbering the Body, or a Canker infesting and corrupting it.

As no Man (at least with Decency, Convenience and Comfort) can live in the World, without being oblig'd to divers other Men for their Help in providing Accommodations for him; so Justice and Ingenuity (corroborated by divine Sanctions) do require of him, that in Commutation he, one way or other, should undertake some Pains redounding to the Benefit of others.

So hath the great Author of Order distributed the Ranks and Offices of Men in order to mutual Benefit and Comfort, that one Man should plow, another thresh, another grind, another labour at the Forge, another knit or weave; another sail, another trade, another supervise all these labouring to keep them all in Order and Peace; that one should work with his Hands and Feet, another with his Head and Tongue; all conspiring to one common End, the Welfare of the whole, and the supply of what is useful to each particular Member; every Man so reciprocally obliging and being obliged; the Prince being oblig'd to the Husbandman for his Bread, to the Weaver for his Cloaths, to the Mason for his Palace, to the Smith for his Sword; those being all obliged to him for his vigilant Care in protecting them; for their Security in pursuing the Work, and enjoying the Fruit of their Industry.

So every Man hath a Calling, and proper Business; whereto that Industry is required, I need not much to prove, the thing it self in Reason and Experience being so clearly evident; for what Business can be well dispatched, what Success can be expected to any Undertaking, in what Calling can any Man thrive without Industry? What Business is there that will go on of it self, or proceed to any good Issue if we do not carefully look to it, steadily hold it in its Course, constantly push and drive it forward? It is true, as in Nature, so in all Affairs, *Nihil movet non motum*, nothing moveth without being moved.

Our own Interest should move us to be industrious in our Calling, that we may obtain the good Effects of being so in a comfortable and creditable Subsistence; that we may not suffer the Damages and Wants, the Disappointments and Disgraces ensuing on Sloth; but the chief Motive should be from Piety and Conscience; for that it is a Duty which we owe to God. For God having placed us in our Station; he having apportioned to us our Task, we being in Transaction of our Business his Servants, we do owe to him that necessary Property of good Servants, ^{1 Cor. 4. 2.} without which Fidelity cannot subsist; for how can he be looked on as a faithful Servant, who doth not effectually perform the Work charged on him, or diligently execute the Orders of his Master?

St. Paul doth enjoin Servants, that they should *in all things obey their Masters*, ^{Col. 3. 22.} with conscientious Regard to God, as therein performing Service to God, and ^{Eph. 6. 5.} expecting Recompence from him: And of Princes he saith, that they, in Dispensation of Justice, enacting Laws, imposing Taxes, and all political Administrations, are *the Ministers of God*, ^{1 Cor. 7. 22.} *περὸν ἀγγέλων*, *attending constantly upon this very thing*: ^{Rom. 13. 6.} And if these Extremes, the highest and lowest of all Vocations, are Services of God; if the highest upon that Score be tied to so much Diligence, then surely all middle Places upon the same Account of Conscience toward God do exact no less.

If he that hath one Talent, and he that hath ten must both improve them for God's Interest; then he that hath two, or three, or more, is obliged to the same Duty proportionably.

Every one should consider the World as the Family of that great *Paterfamilias* (of whom the whole Family in Heaven and Earth is named) and himself as an Officer ^{Eph. 3. 15.} or Servant therein, by God's Will and Designation constituted in that Employment, into which Providence hath cast him; to confer in his Order and Way, somewhat toward a Provision for the Maintenance of himself, and of his Fellow-Servants. Of a superiour Officer our Lord saith, *Who is that faithful and wise* ^{Matth. 24. 45.} *Servant, whom his Lord hath made ruler over his Household, to give them their meat in* ^{Luke 12. 42.} *due season*? So the greatest Men are as Stewards, Treasurers, Comptrollers, or Purveyors; the rest are inferiour Servants, in their proper Rank and Capacity.

And he that with Diligence performeth his respective Duty (be it high and honourable, or mean and contemptible in outward Appearance) will please God, as keeping good Order, and as being useful to his Service; so that upon the Reckoning God will say to him, *Well done good and faithful Servant, thou hast been* ^{1 Cor. 14. 33.} *faithful over a few things; I will make thee ruler over many things; enter thou into the* ^{Mat. 25. 21.} *joy of thy Lord*. But he that doth otherwise (behaving himself carelessly or sluggishly in his Business) will offend God, as committing Disorder, and as being unprofitable.

He committeth Disorder, according to that of St. Paul; *We hear there are some,* ^{2 Thess. 3. 11.} *which walk among you disorderly, not working at all*. His Sentence and Doom

Mat. 25. 26. will be, according to our Lord, *O thou wicked and slothful Servant—Cast the un-*
 30. *profitable Servant into utter darkness*; which Words are spoken in relation to one, who being a Flatterer, or Sluggard in his Calling, did not improve the special Talent entrusted with him for God's Service.

In fine, if we are conscientiously industrious in our Vocation; we shall assuredly find the Blessing of God thereon; and that he thereby will convey good Success, Comfort, competent Wealth, a fair Reputation, all desirable Good unto us; for as all these things are promised to Industry, so the Promise especially doth belong to that Industry, which a Man doth exercise in an orderly Course of Action in his own Way; or rather in God's Way, wherein Divine Providence hath set him.

An irregular or impertinent Laboriousness, out of a Man's Calling or Sphere; a being diligent in other Men's Affairs, invading their Office (as if I a Priest will be trading, a Layman preaching) may not claim the Benefit of those Promises or the Blessings of Industry; But a Husbandman, who (with conscientious Regard to God, and Confidence in him) is painful in tilling his Ground, may expect a good Crop, a Merchant who (upon the same Principle, with the like Disposition) earnestly followeth his Trade, may hope for safe Voyages and good Markets; A Prince carefully minding his Affairs may look for Peace and Prosperity to his Country; a Scholar studying hard may be well assured of getting Knowledge, and finding Truth; all, who with honest Diligence constantly do pursue their Business, may confidently and cheerfully hope to reap the Advantages suitable to it from the favourable Blessing of God. So that we have all Reason to observe the Apostle's Precept, *Not to be slothful in business*.

I should apply this Doctrine to our own Case, urging its Practice by Considerations peculiar to our Vocation; but having already passed the Bounds of Time, I reserve the doing it to another Opportunity.

1 Thess. 5. 23. *Now the God of Peace sanctify you wholly, and make you perfect in every good work to*
 Heb. 13. 20. *do his Will; working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight; through our Blessed Saviour Jesus Christ; To whom for ever be all Glory and Praise. AMEN.*

SERMON XXI.

Of INDUSTRY in our particular Calling, as Gentlemen.

R O M. XII. 11.

Not slothful in Business.

I HAVE largely treated upon the Duty recommended in this Precept, and urged the Observance of it in general, at a Distance; I now intend more particularly and closely to apply it, in reference to those Persons who seem more especially obliged to it, and whose observing it may prove of greatest Consequence to publick Good; the which Application may also be most suitable and profitable to this Audience; those Persons are of two Sorts; the one *Gentlemen*, the other *Scholars*.

I. The *First* Place, as Civility demandeth, we assign to *Gentlemen*; or Persons of eminent Rank in the World, well allied, graced with Honour, and furnished with Wealth; the which sort of Persons I conceive in a high Degree obliged to exercise Industry in Business.

This

This at first hearing may seem a little Paradoxical and strange; for who have less Business than Gentlemen, who do need less Industry than they? He that hath a fair Estate, and can live on his Means, what hath he to do, what Labour or Trouble can be exacted of him, what hath he to think on, or trouble his Head with, but how to invent Recreations and Pastimes to divert himself, and spend his vast Leisure pleasantly? Why should he not be allowed to enjoy himself, and the Benefits, which Nature or Fortune have freely dispensed to him, as he thinketh best, without Offence? Why may he not say with the rich Man in the Gospel, *Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry?* Is it not often said by the Wise-man, that there is *nothing better under the Sun, than that a man should make his soul to enjoy good* in a chearful and comfortable Fruition of his Estate? According to the passable Notion and Definition, *What is a Gentleman but his Pleasure?* Luke 12. 19.
Eccles. 2. 24.
3. 22. 5. 18.
8. 15.

If this be true, if a Gentleman be nothing else but this, then truly he is a sad Piece, the most inconsiderable, the most despicable, the most pitiful and wretched Creature in the World: If it is his Privilege to do nothing, it is his Privilege to be most unhappy; and to be so, will be his Fate, if he live according to it; for he that is of no Worth or Use, who produceth no beneficial Fruit, who performeth no Service to God, or to the World, what Title can he have to Happiness? What Capacity thereof? What Reward can he claim? What Comfort can he feel? To what Temptations is he exposed? What Guilts will he incur?

But in truth it is far otherwise; to suppose that a Gentleman is loose from Business, is a great Mistake; for indeed no Man hath more to do, no Man lieth under greater Engagements to Industry than he.

He is deeply obliged to be continually busie in more Ways than other Men, who have but one simple Calling or Occupation allotted to them; and that upon a triple Account; in respect to God, to the World, and to himself.

1. He is first obliged to continual Employment in respect to God.

He out of a grateful Regard to Divine Bounty for the Eminency of his Station, adorned with Dignity and Repute, for the plentiful Accommodations and Comforts of his Life, for his Exemption from those pinching Wants, those meaner Cares, those sordid Entertainments, and those toilsome Drudgeries, to which other Men are subject, is bound to be more diligent in God's Service, employing all the Advantages of his State to the Glory of his munificent Benefactor, to whose good Providence alone he doth owe them; for *who maketh him to differ from another?* 1 Cor. 4. 7. And *what hath he that he did not receive* from God's free Bounty?

In proportion to the Bulk of his Fortune, his Heart should be enlarged with a thankful Sense of God's Goodness to him; his Mouth should ever be filled with Acknowledgment and Praise, he should always be ready to express his grateful Resentment of so great and peculiar Obligations.

He should dedicate larger Portions of that free Leisure which God hath granted to him, in waiting upon God, and constant Performances of Devotion.

He, in frequently reflecting on the particular ample Favours of God to him, should imitate the Holy Psalmist, that illustrious Pattern of great and fortunate Men; saying after him, with his Spirit and Disposition of Soul; *Thou hast brought me to great honour, and comforted me on every side, therefore will I praise thee and thy faithfulness, O God.* Psal. 71. 21.---

Lord, by thy favour thou hast made my mountain to stand strong: Thou hast set my feet in a large room: Thou preparest a table before me; —Thou anointest my head with oil, my cup runneth over; —to the end that my glory may sing praise unto thee, and not be silent: The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance, and of my cup; thou maintainest my lot, the lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places, yea, I have a goodly heritage; therefore I will bless the Lord. Psal. 30. 7.---
Psal. 31. 8.
Psal. 23. 5.
Psal. 30. 12.
Psal. 16. 5.

In conceiving such Meditations, his Head and his Heart should constantly be employed; as also in contriving ways of declaring and discharging real Gratitude; asking himself, *What shall I render unto the Lord for all his Benefits?* What shall I render to him, not only as a Man for all the Gifts of Nature, as a Christian for all the Blessings of Grace; but as a Gentleman also, for the many Advantages of this my Condition, beyond so many of my Brethren, by special Providence indulged to me? Psal. 116. 12.

• He hath all the common Duties of Piety, of Charity, of Sobriety to discharge with Fidelity; for being a Gentleman doth not exempt him from being a Christian, but rather more strictly doth engage him to be such in a higher Degree than others; It is an Obligation peculiarly incumbent on him, in return for God's peculiar Favours, to pay God all due Obedience, and to exercise himself in all good Works; Disobedience being a more heinous Crime in him than in others, who have not such Encouragements to serve God.

His Obedience may be inculcated by those Arguments which *Joshua* and *Samuel* did use in pressing it on the *Israelites*; Only (said *Samuel*) fear the Lord and serve him in truth, for consider how great things God hath done for you; and I have given you (saith God by *Joshua*) a land for which ye did not labour, and cities which ye built not; and ye dwell in them; Of the vine-yards and olive-yards which ye planted not, do ye eat; Now therefore fear the Lord, and serve him in sincerity and in truth.

His Disobedience may be aggravated, as *Nehemiah* did that of the *Israelites*, They took strong cities and a fat land, and possessed houses full of all goods, wells digged, vine-yards, and olive-yards, and fruit-trees in abundance; so they did eat and were filled, and became fat; and delighted themselves in thy great goodness; nevertheless they were disobedient, and rebelled against thee, and cast thy law behind their backs — they have not served thee in their kingdom, and in thy great goodness, which thou gavest them; neither turned they from their wicked works.

A Gentleman hath more Talents committed to him, and consequently more Employment required of him; If a rustick Labourer, or a Mechanick Artisan hath one Talent, a Gentleman hath ten; He hath innate Vigour of Spirit, and Height of Courage fortified by Use, he hath Accomplishment and Refinement of Parts by liberal Education, he hath the Succours of Parentage, Alliance and Friendship; he hath Wealth, he hath Honour, he hath Power and Authority, he hath command of Time and Leisure; he hath so many precious and useful Talents entrusted to him, not to be wrapped up in a napkin, or hid den under-ground; not to be squandred away in private Satisfaction; but for negotiation, to be put out to use, to be improved in the most advantageous Way to God's Service: Every Talent doth require a particular Care and Pains to manage it well.

He particularly is God's Steward, entrusted with God's Substance, for the Sustainance and Supply of God's Family; to relieve his Fellow-Servants in their Need, upon seasonable Occasions by Hospitality, Mercy, and charitable Beneficence; according to that Intimation of our Lord, *Who is that faithful and wise steward whom his Lord shall make ruler of his household to give them their portion and meat in due season?* And according to those Apostolical Precepts, *As every one hath received a gift (or special Favour,) even so minister the same to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God; and Charge the rich in this world, — that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate.*

And he that is oblig'd to purvey for so many, and so to abound in good Works, how can he want Business? How can he pretend to a *Writ of Ease*?

Surely that Gentleman is very blind, and very barren of Invention, who is to seek for Work fit for him, or cannot easily discern many Employments belonging to him, of great Concern and Consequence.

It is easie to prompt and shew him many Businesses, indispensibly belonging to him, as such.

It is his Business to minister Relief to his poor Neighbours in their Wants and Distresses by his Wealth. It is his Business to direct and advise the Ignorant, to comfort the Afflicted, to reclaim the Wicked, and encourage the Good by his Wisdom. It is his Business to protect the Weak, to rescue the Oppressed, to ease those who groan under heavy Burthens, by his Power; to be such a Gentleman and so employed as *Job* was; who did not eat his morsel alone, so that the fatherless did not eat thereof; who did not withhold the poor from their desire, or cause the eyes of the widow to fail; who did not see any perish for want of clothing, or any poor without covering; who delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him.

It is his Business to be hospitable; kind and helpful to Strangers; following those noble Gentlemen, *Abraham* and *Lot*, who were so ready to invite and entertain Strangers with bountiful Courtesie.

It

1. It is his Business to maintain Peace, and appease Dissentions among his Neighbours, interpoling his Counsel and Authority in order thereto; whereto he hath that brave Gentleman *Moses* recommended for his Pattern.

Exod. 2. 12.
Acts 7. 26.

It is his Business to promote the Welfare and Prosperity of his Country with his best Endeavours, and by all his Interest; in which Practice the Sacred History doth propound divers gallant Gentlemen (*Joseph, Moses, Samuel, Nehemiah, Daniel, Mordecai*, and all such renowned Patriots) to guide him.

Jud. 5. 9.

It is his Business to govern his Family well; to educate his Children in Piety and Vertue; to keep his Servants in good Order.

Josh. 24. 15.
Psalm. 101.—

It is his Business to look to his Estate, and to keep it from wasting; that he may sustain the Repute of his Person and Quality with Decency; that he may be furnished with Ability to do Good, may provide well for his Family, may be Hospitable, may have wherewith to help his Brethren; for if, according to *St. Paul's* Injunction, a Man should *work with his own hands, that he may have somewhat to impart to him that needeth*; then must he that hath an Estate, be careful to preserve it, for the same good Purpose.

Μετὰ δὲ δύναμι.
Eph. 4. 28.

It is his Business to cultivate his Mind with Knowledge, with generous Dispositions, with all worthy Accomplishments befitting his Condition, and qualifying him for Honourable Action; so that he may excel, and bear himself above the vulgar Level no less in real inward Worth, than in exterior Garb; that he be not a Gentleman merely in Name or Shew.

It is Business (and that no slight or easie Business) to eschew the Vices, to check the Passions, to withstand the Temptations, to which his Condition is liable; taking heed that his Wealth, Honour, and Power do not betray him into Pride, Insolence, or Contempt of his poorer Brethren; unto Injustice or Oppression; unto Luxury and riotous Excess; unto Sloth, Stupidity, Forgetfulness of God, and irreligious Prophaneness.

Ardua nam
res est opibus
non tradere
mores.

It is a Business especially incumbent on him to be careful of his Ways, that they may have good Influence on others, who are apt to look upon him as their Guide and Pattern.

He should labour and study to be a Leader unto Vertue, and a Notable Promoter thereof; directing and exciting Men thereto by his exemplary Conversation; encouraging them by his Countenance and Authority; rewarding the Goodness of meaner People by his Bounty and Favour: He should be such a Gentleman as *Noah*, who *preached righteousness* by his Words and Works before a prophane World.

Such particular Affairs hath every Person of Quality, Credit, Wealth and Interest, allotted to him by God, and laid on him as Duties; the which to discharge faithfully, will enough employ a Man, and doth require Industry, much Care, much Pains; excluding Sloth and Negligence: So that it is impossible for a Sluggard to be a worthy Gentleman, vertuously disposed, a charitable Neighbour, a good Patriot, a good Husband of his Estate; any thing of that, to which God, by setting him in such a Station, doth call him.

Thus is a Gentleman obliged to Industry in respect of God, who justly doth exact those Labours of Piety, Charity, and all Vertue from him. Farther;

2. He hath also Obligations to Mankind, demanding Industry from him, upon Accounts of common Humanity, Equity and Ingenuity; For,

How can he fairly subsist upon the common Industry of Mankind without bearing a Share thereof? How can he well satisfy himself to dwell stately, to feed daintily, to be finely clad, to maintain a pompous Retinue merely upon the Sweat and Toil of others, without himself rendring a Compensation, or making some competent Returns of Care and Pain, redounding to the Good of his Neighbour?

How can he justly claim, or reasonably expect from the World the Respect agreeable to his Rank, if he doth not by worthy Performances conduce to the Benefit of it? Can Men be obliged to regard those, from whom they receive no Good?

If no Gentleman be tied to serve the Publick, or to yield Help in sustaining the common Burthens, and supplying the Needs of Mankind, then is the whole Order merely a Burthen, and an Offence to the World; a Race of Drones, a Pack of Cyphers in the Common-wealth, standing for nothing, deserving no Consideration

or Regard : And if any are bound, then all are ; for why should the whole Burthen lie on some, while others are exempted ?

It is indeed supposed, that all are bound thereto, seeing that all have Recompences publickly allowed to them upon such Considerations ; divers Respects and Privileges peculiar to the Order, grounded upon this Supposition, that they deserve such Advantages by conferring notable Benefit to the Publick ; the which indeed it were an Arrogance to seek, and an Iniquity to accept for doing nothing.

It is an unfufferable Pride for any Man to pretend, or conceit himself to differ so much from his Brethren, that he may be allowed to live in ease and Sloth, while the rest of Mankind are subject to continual Toil and Trouble. Moreover,

A Gentleman is bound to be industrious for his own sake ; it is a Duty which he oweth to himself, to his Honour, to his Interest, to his Welfare. He cannot without Industry continue like himself, or maintain the Honour and Repute becoming his Quality and State ; or secure himself from Contempt and Disgrace ; for to be honourable and slothful are things inconsistent ; seeing Honour doth not grow, nor can subsist without undertaking worthy Designs, constantly pursuing them, and happily atchieving them ; it is the Fruit and Reward of such Actions, which are not performed with Ease.

External Respect and a Semblance of Honour, for the sake of publick Order, may be due to an exterior Rank or Title ; but to pay this, is not to honour the Person, but his Title, because it is supposed, that Men of real Worth and Use do bear it ; or, left by refusing it to one, the whole Order may seem disrespected ; but yet true Honour, or mental Esteem is not due upon such Accounts ; nor is it possible to render it unto any Person, who doth not by worthy Qualities and good Deeds appear to merit it.

Nor can a Gentleman without Industry, uphold his real Interests against the Attempts of Envy, of Treachery, of Flattery, of Sycophantry, of Avarice, to which his Condition is obnoxious ; to preserve his Wealth and Estate, which are the Supports of his Quality, he must endure Care and Pains ; otherwise he will by greedy Harpies, and crafty Lurchers be rifled or cozened of his Substance ; it will of it self go to wreck, and be imbezzled by Negligence.

He cannot without Industry guard his Personal Welfare from manifold Inconveniences, Molestations and Mischiefs ; Idleness it self will be very troublesome and irksome to him. His Time will lie upon his Hands, as a pestering Incumbrance. His Mind will be infested with various Distractions and Distempers ; vain and sad Thoughts, foul Lusts, and unquiet Passions will spring up therein, as Weeds in a neglected Soil. His Body will languish and become destitute of Health, of Vigour, of Activity, for want of due Exercise. All the Mischiefs which naturally do spring from Sloth and Stupidity will seize upon him.

4. Thus upon various Accounts a Gentleman is engag'd to Business, and concern'd to exercise Industry therein ; we may add, that indeed the very Nature of Gentility, or the true Notion of a Gentleman doth imply so much.

For what, I pray, is a Gentleman, what Properties hath he, what Qualities are characteristical or peculiar to him, whereby he is distinguished from others, and raised above the Vulgar ? Are they not especially two, *Courage* and *Courtesie* ? Which he that wanteth is not otherwise than equivocally a Gentleman, as an Image or a Carcase is a Man ; without which Gentility in a conspicuous Degree is no more than a vain Show, or an empty Name ; and these plainly do involve Industry, do exclude Slothfulness ; for *Courage* doth prompt boldly to undertake, and resolutely to dispatch great Enterprizes and Employments of Difficulty : It is not seen in a flaunting Garb, or strutting Deportment ; not in hectorly, ruffian-like swaggering or huffing ; not in high Looks or big Words ; but in stout and gallant Deeds, employing Vigour of Mind and Heart to atchieve them ; how can a Man otherwise approve himself for courageous, than by signaling himself in such a way ?

And for *Courtesie*, how otherwise can it be well displayed, than in sedulous Activity for the Good of Men ; It surely doth not consist in modish Forms of Address, or complemental Expressions, or hollow Professions, commonly void of Meaning, or of Sincerity ; but in real Performances of Beneficence, when Occasion doth invite, and in waiting for Opportunities to do Good ; the which Practice is accompanied with some Care and Pain, adding a Price to it ; for an easie
Cour-

Courtesie is therefore small, because easie, and may be deemed to proceed rather from ordinary Humanity, than from gentile Disposition ; so that in fine, he alone doth appear truly a Gentleman, who hath the Heart to undergo hard Tasks for publick Good, and willingly taketh Pains to oblige his Neighbours and Friends.

5. The Work indeed of Gentlemen is not so gross, but it may be as smart and painful as any other. For all hard Work is not manual ; there are other Instruments of Action beside the Plow, the Spade, the Hammer, the Shuttle ; nor doth every Work produce Sweat, and visible tiring of Body ; the Head may work hard in Contrivance of good Designs ; the Tongue may be very active in dispensing Advice, Perswasion, Comfort, and Edification in Vertue : A Man may bestir himself in *going about to do good* ; these are Works imploying the cleanly Industry of a Gentleman.

6. In such Works it was, that the truest and greatest Pattern of Gentility that ever was, did employ himself : Who was that ? Even our Lord himself ; for he had no particular Trade or Profession : No Man can be more loose from any Engagement to the World than he was ; no Man had less need of Business or Pains-taking than he ; for he had a vast Estate, being *heir of all things*, all the World being at his Disposal, yea, infinitely more, it being in his Power with a Word, to create whatever he would to serve his Need, or satisfy his Pleasure ; Omnipotency being his Treasure and Supply ; he had a Retinue of Angels to wait on him, and minister to him ; whatever Sufficiency any Man can fancy to himself to dispense with his taking pains, that had he in a far higher Degree : Yet did he find Work for himself, and continually was employed in performing Service to God, and imparting Benefits to Men ; nor was ever Industry exercised upon Earth comparable to his. Isa. 53. 11.

Gentlemen therefore would do well to make him the Pattern of their Life, to whose Industry they must be beholden for their Salvation : In order whereto we recommend them to his Grace.

SERMON XXII.

Of INDUSTRY in our particular Calling, as *Scholars*.

R O M. XII. 11.

Not slothful in Business.

I Proceed to the other Sort of Persons, whom we did propound, Namely,

II. *Scholars*, and that on them particularly great Engagements do lie to be industrious, is most evident from various Considerations.

The Nature and Design of this Calling doth suppose Industry ; the Matter and Extent of it doth require Industry ; the Worth of it doth highly deserve Industry. We are in special Gratitude to God, in Charity to Men, in due Regard to our selves bound unto it.

1. First, I say, the Nature and Design of our Calling doth suppose Industry : Eccles. 2. 21.
There is (saith the divine Preacher) *a man whose labour is in wisdom, in knowledge, and in equity* ; Such Men are Scholars ; so that we are indeed no Scholars, but absurd Usurpers of the Name, if we are not laborious ; for what is a Scholar, but one who retireth his Person, and avocath his Mind from other Occupations, and
worldly

Ἡ σοφία
γραμματεως
ἐν εὐκαιρίᾳ
ἀολῆς.
Eccl. 38. 24.

worldly Entertainments, that he may ἀολῆεν, *vacare studiis*, employ his Mind and Leisure on Study and Learning, in the Search of Truth, the Quest of Knowledge, the Improvement of his Reason. Wherefore an idle Scholar, a lazy Student, a sluggish Man of Learning, is Nonsense.

What is Learning but a diligent Attendance to Instruction of Masters, skilled in any Knowledge, and conveying their Notions to us in Word or Writing?

Prov. 2. 2.

What is Study, but an earnest, steady, persevering Application of Mind to some Matter, on which we fix our Thoughts, with intent to see through it? What in Solomon's Language are these *Scholastick* Occupations, but *inclining the ear*, and *applying our heart to understanding*; than which commonly there is nothing more laborious, more straining Nature, and more tiring our Spirits; whence it is well compared to the most painful Exercises of Body and Soul?

Prov. 2. 4.

The *Wise-man*, advising Men to seek Wisdom, the which is the proper Design of our Calling, doth intimate that Work to be like digging in the Mines for Silver, and like searching all about for concealed Treasure; than which there can hardly be any more difficult and painful Task, *If (saith he) thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures, then shalt thou understand.*—Otherwhere he compareth the same Work to assiduous watching and waiting, like that of a Guard or a Client, which are the greatest Instances of Diligence; *Blessed (saith he; or Wisdom by him saith, Blessed) is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my Gates, waiting at the posts of my Doors.*

Prov. 8. 34.

Wherefore if we will approve our selves to be what we are called, and what we pretend to be, if we will avoid being Impostors, assuming a Name not due to us, we must not be slothful. Farther,

2. The Matter and Extent of our Business doth require Industry from us: The Matter of it, which is Truth and Knowledge; the Extent which is very large and comprehensive, taking in all Truth, all Knowledge, worthy our Study, and useful for the Designs of it.

Our Business is to find Truth; the which, even in Matters of high Importance, is not easily to be discovered; being as a Vein of Silver, encompassed with Earth and mixed with Dross, deeply laid in the Obscurity of Things, wrapt up in false Appearances, entangled with Objections, and perplexed with Debates; being therefore not readily discoverable; especially by Minds clouded with Prejudices, Lufts, Passions, partial Affections, Appetites of Honour and Interest; whence to descry it requireth the most curious Observation and solicitous Circumspection that can be; together with great Pains in the Preparation and Purgation of our Minds toward the Enquiry of it.

Our Business is to attain Knowledge, not concerning obvious and vulgar Matters, but about sublime, abstruse, intricate and knotty Subjects, remote from common Observation and Sense; to get sure and exact Notions about which, will try the best Forces of our Mind with their utmost Endeavours; in firmly settling Principles, in strictly deducing Consequences, in orderly digesting Conclusions, in faithfully retaining what we learn by our Contemplation and Study.

And if to get a competent Knowledge about a few things, or to be reasonably skilful in any sort of Learning, be difficult, how much Industry doth it require to be well seen in many, or to have waded through the vast Compass of Learning, in no part whereof a Scholar may conveniently or handsomely be ignorant? Seeing there is such a Connexion of Things, and Dependance of Notions, that one Part of Learning doth confer Light to another, that a Man can hardly well understand any thing without knowing divers other things; that he will be a lame Scholar, who hath not an Insight into many kinds of Knowledge, that he can hardly be a good Scholar who is not a general one.

To understand so many Languages (which are the Shells of Knowledge) to comprehend so many Sciences (full of various Theorems and Problems) to peruse so many Histories (of ancient and modern times;) to know the World, both natural and human; to be acquainted with the various Inventions, Inquiries, Opinions and Controversies of learned Men; to skill the Arts of expressing our Mind, and imparting our Conceptions with Advantage, so as to instruct or persuade others; these are Works indeed, which will exercise and strain our Faculties (our Reason, our Fancy, our Memory) in painful Study.

The Knowledge of such Things is not innate to us ; it doth not of it self spring up in our Minds ; it is not any ways incident by Chance, or infus'd by Grace (except rarely by Miracle ;) common Observation doth not produce it ; it cannot be purchased at any rate, except by that, for which it was said of old, *the Gods sell all things*, that is for Pains ; without which, the best Wit and greatest Capacity may not fender a Man learned, as the best Soil will not yield good Fruit or Grain, if they be not planted or sown therein.

Consider, if you please, what a Scholar *Solomon* was ; beside his Skill in *Politics*, which was his principal Faculty and Profession, whereby he did with admirable Dexterity and Prudence manage the Affairs of that great Kingdom, *judging his people, and discerning what was good, and bad* ; accurately dispensing Justice ; settling his Country in a flourishing state of Peace, Order, Plenty and Wealth ; largely extending his Territory ; so that his Wisdom of this kind was famous over the Earth ; Beside, I say, this civil Wisdom, he had an exquisite Skill in Natural *Philosophy* and *Medicine* ; For *He spake of Trees (or Plants) from the cedar that is in Lebanon, even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall : He spake also of beasts and of fowl, and of creeping things, and of fishes.*

He was well versed in the *Mathematicks* ; for it is said, *Solomon's wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the children of the East-Country, and all the wisdom of Egypt* ; the the Wisdom of which Nations did consist in those Sciences. And of his *Mechanick* Skill, he left for a Monument, the most glorious Structure that ever stood on Earth.

He was very skilful in Poetry and Musick ; for he did himself *compose above a thousand songs* ; whereof one yet extant declareth the Loftiness of his Fancy, the Richness of his Vein, and the Elegancy of his Style.

He had great Ability in Rhetorick ; according to that in *Wisdom, God granted me to speak as I would* ; and that in *Ecclesiastes, The Preacher sought to find out acceptable Words* ; a great Instance of which Faculty, we have in that admirable Prayer of his Composure at the Dedication of the Temple.

He did wonderfully excel in *Ethicks* ; concerning which he *spake three thousand Proverbs*, or moral Aphorisms ; and *Moreover (saith Ecclesiastes) because the Preacher was wise, he still taught the people knowledge ; yea he gave good heed, and sought out, and set in order many Proverbs* ; the which did contain a great Variety of notable Observations, and useful Directions for common Life, couched in pithy Expressions.

As for *Theology*, as the Study of that was the chief Study to which he exhorteth others (as to the *head*, or principal Part of *wisdom*) so questionless he was himself most conversant therein ; for Proof whereof he did leave so many excellent Theorems and Precepts of Divinity to us.

In fine, there is no sort of Knowledge, to which he did not apply his Study ; witness himself in those Words, *I gave my heart to seek and search out by wisdom concerning all things that are under heaven.*

Such a Scholar was he ; and such if we have a noble Ambition to be, we must use the Course he did ; which was first in his Heart to prefer Wisdom before all worldly things ; then to pray to God for it, or for his Blessing in our quest of it ; then to use the Means of attaining it, diligent Searching and hard Study ; for that this was his method he telleth us, *I (saith he) applied my heart to know, and to search, and to seek out wisdom, and the reason of things.*

Such Considerations shew the Necessity of Industry for a Scholar ; But,

3. The Worth, and Excellency, and great Utility, together with the Pleasantness of his Vocation, deserving the highest Industry, do superadd much Obligation thereto.

We are much bound to be diligent out of Ingenuity, and in Gratitude to God, who by his gracious Providence hath assigned to us a Calling so worthy, an Employment so comfortable, a way of Life no less commodious, beneficial and delightful to our selves, than serviceable to God, and useful for the World.

If we had our Option and Choice, what Calling would we desire before this of any whereto Men are affixed ? How could we better employ our Mind, or place our Labour, or spend our Time, or pass our Pilgrimage in this World, than in scholastical Occupations ?

It were hard to reckon up, or to express the numberless great Advantages of this Calling, I shall therefore only touch some, which readily fall under my Thought, recommending its Value to us.

It is a Calling, the Design whereof conspireth with the general End of our Being ; the Perfection of our Nature in its Endowments, and the Fruition of it in its best Operations.

It is a Calling that doth not employ us in bodily Toil, in worldly Care, in Pursuit of trivial Affairs, in sordid Drudgeries ; but in those Angelical Operations of Soul, the Contemplation of Truth, and Attainment of Wisdom ; which are the worthiest Exercises of our Reason, and sweetest Entertainments of our Mind ; the most precious Wealth, and most beautiful Ornaments of our Soul ; whereby our Faculties are improved, are polished and refined, are enlarged in their Power and Use by habitual Accessions : the which are conducive to our own greatest Profit and Benefit, as serving to rectifie our Wills, to compose our Affections, to guide our Lives in the Ways of Vertue, to bring us unto Felicity.

It is a Calling, which being duly follow'd, will most sever us from the vulgar sort of Men, and advance us above the common Pitch ; enduing us with Light to see farther than other Men, disposing us to affect better things, and to slight those meaner Objects of Human Desire, on which Men commonly dote ; freeing us from the erroneous Conceits, and from the perverse Affections of common People. It is said διπλὴν ὁρᾶσιν οἱ μεθόντες γράμματα, *men of learning are double-sighted* ; but it is true, that in many cases they see infinitely farther than a vulgar Sight doth reach ; and if a Man by serious Study doth acquire a clear and solid Judgment of things, so as to assign to each its due Weight and Price ; if he accordingly be inclined in his Heart to affect and pursue them ; if from clear and right Notions of Things, a meek and ingenuous Temper of Mind, a Command and Moderation of Passions, a firm Integrity, and a cordial Love of Goodness do spring, he thereby becometh another kind of thing, much different from those brutish Men (Beasts of the People) who blindly follow the Motions of their sensual Appetite, or the Suggestions of their Fancy, or their mistaken Prejudices.

It is a Calling which hath these considerable Advantages, that by vertue of Improvement therein, we can see with our own Eyes, and guide our selves by our own Reasons, not being led blind-fold about, or depending precariously on the Conduct of others in Matters of highest Concern to us. That we are exempted from giddy Credulity, from wavering Levity, from fond Admiration of Persons and Things, being able to distinguish of Things, and to settle our Judgments about them, and to get an intimate Acquaintance with them, assuring to us their true Nature and Worth ; that we are also thereby rescu'd from admiring our selves, and that over-weening Self-conceitedness, of which the *Wise-man* saith,

Prov. 26. 16. *The sluggard is wiser in his own conceit, than seven men that can render a reason.*

It is a Calling, whereby we are qualified and enabled to do God Service ; to gratifie his Desires, to promote his Honour, to advance his Interests ; to render his Name glorious in the World ; by teaching, maintaining and propagating his Truth ; by persuading Men to render their due Love, Reverence, and Obedience to him ; than which we can have no more honourable or satisfactory Employment ; more like to that of the glorious and blessed Spirits.

It is a Calling, the due Prosecution whereof doth ingratiate us with God, and procureth his Favour ; rendring us fit Objects of his Love, and entitling us thereto in regard to our Qualities, and Recompence of our Works : For *God loveth none but him that dwelleth with wisdom* ; and, *So shalt thou find favour and good understanding in the sight of God and man.*

Sap. 7. 28.
Psal. 5. 5.
Prov. 3. 4.

It is a Calling, whereby with greatest Advantage we may benefit Men, and deserve well of the World ; drawing Men to the Knowledge and Service of God, reclaiming them from Errour and Sin, rescuing them from Misery, and conducting them to Happiness ; by clear Instruction, by faithful Admonition, by powerful Exhortation : And what can be more noble, than to be the Lights of the World, the Guides of Practice to Men, the Authors of so much Good, so egregious Benefactors to Mankind ?

It is a Calling most exempt from the Cares, the Crosses, the Turmoils, the factious Jars, the anxious Intrigues, the vexatious Molestations of the World ;
its

its Business lying out of the Road of those Mischiefs, wholly lying in solitary Retirement, or being transacted in the most innocent and ingenuous Company.

It is a Calling least subject to any Danger or Disappointment ; wherein we may well be assured not to miscarry or lose our Labour ; for the Merchant indeed by manifold Accidents may lose his Voyage, or find a bad Market ; the Husbandman may plough and sow in vain ; but the Student hardly can fail of improving his Stock, and reaping a good Crop of Knowledge ; especially if he study with a conscientious Mind, and pious Reverence to God, imploring his gracious Help and Blessing.

It is a Calling, the Industry us'd wherein doth abundantly recompense it self, by the Pleasure and Sweetness which it carrieth in it ; so that the more Pains one taketh, the more Delight he findeth, feeling himself proportionably to grow in Knowledge ; and that his Work becometh continually more easie to him.

It is a Calling, the Business whereof doth so exercise as not to weary, so entertain as not to cloy us ; being not (as other Occupations are) a drawing in a Mill, or a nauseous (tedious) Repetition of the same Work ; but a continual Progress toward fresh Objects ; our Mind not being staked to one or a few poor Matters, but having immense Fields of Contemplation, wherein it may everlastingly expatiate, with great Proficiency and Pleasure.

Πνευματικὴ δὲ
αἰὲν πονοῦν δι-
δακτικὴ ἐστίν.

It is a Calling which doth ever afford plentiful Fruit, even in regard to the Conveniencies of this present and temporal State ; the which sufficiently will requite the Pains expended thereon : For if we be honestly Industrious we shall not want Success ; and succeeding we shall not want a Competence of Wealth, of Reputation, of Interest in the World : For concerning Wisdom, which is the Result of honest Study, the *Wise-man* telleth us, *Riches and Honour are with her*, Prov. 8. 18. *yea, durable riches and righteousness : length of days are in her right hand, and in her left* 3. 16. 4. 9. *hand riches and honour : Exalt her, and she shall promote thee, she shall bring thee to honour, when thou dost embrace her ; she shall give to thine head an ornament of grace, a crown of glory shall she deliver to thee : In common Experience the Wealth of the Mind doth qualifie for Employments, which have good Recompences annexed to them ; and neither God nor Man will suffer him long to want, who is endowed with worthy Accomplishments of Knowledge : It was a ridiculous Providence in Nero, that if he should chance to lose his Empire, he might live by fidling ; yet his Motto was good ; and Dionysius, another Tyrant, found the Benefit of it ; τὸ πλεονεκτήειν χάρις παρέχει, he that hath any good Art, hath therein an Estate, and Land in every Place ; he is secured against being reduc'd to Extremity of any Misfortune : Wisdom (saith the *Wise-man*) is a defence, and money is a defence ; but the excellency of knowledge is, that wisdom giveth life to them that have it : Money is a Defence, of which Fortune may bereave us ; but Wisdom is beyond its Attacks ; being a Treasure seated in a Place inaccessible to external Impressions.* Eccl. 7. 12.

And as a learned Man cannot be destitute of Substance ; so he cannot want Credit, having such an Ornament, than which none hath a more general Estimation ; and which can be of low Rate only among that sort of Folk, to whom Solomon saith, *How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity ? — and fools hate knowledge ?* Prov. 12. 8. *A man shall be commended according to his wisdom.* Prov. 1. 22. It is that which recommendeth a Man in all Company, and procureth Regard, every one yielding * Attention and Acceptance to instructive, neat, apposite Discourse, (that which the Scripture calleth *acceptable, pleasant gracious words*) Men think themselves obliged thereby by receiving Information and Satisfaction from it ; and accordingly *Every man* (saith the *Wise-man*) *shall kiss his lips, that giveth a right answer ; and — for the grace of his lips the King shall be his friend ; and, the words of a wise-man's mouth are gracious.* Prov. 24. 26. Prov. 22. 15, 26. Eccles. 10. 12. It is that, an Eminency wherein purchaseth lasting Fame, and a Life after Death, in the good Memory and Opinion of Posterity ; *Many shall commend his understanding, and so long as the world endureth, it shall not be blotted out, his memorial shall not depart away, and his name shall live from generation to generation.* Ecclesi. 39. 9. A Fame no less great, and far more innocent than Acts of Chivalry and Martial Prowess ; for is not *Aristotle* as renown'd for teaching the World with his Pen, as *Alexander* for conquering it with his Sword ? Is not one far oftner mentioned than the other ? Do not Men hold themselves much more oblig'd to the Learning of the Philosopher, than to the Valour of the Warriour ? Indeed the Fame of all others is indebted to the Pains of the Scholar, and could not

subsist, but with and by his Fame, *Dignum laude virum musa vetat mori*; Learning consecrateth it Self and its Subject together, to immortal Remembrance.

It is a Calling that fitteth a Man for all Conditions and Fortunes; so that he can enjoy Prosperity with Moderation, and sustain Adversity with Comfort: He that loveth a Book, will never want a faithful Friend, a wholesome Counsellour, a chearful Companion, an effectual Comforter. By Study, by reading, by thinking, one may innocently divert, and pleasantly entertain himself, as in all Weathers, so in all Fortunes.

In fine, it is a Calling, which *Solomon*, who had curiously observed and exactly compared and scann'd, by Reason and by Experience all other Occupations and Ways of Life, did prefer above all others; and we may presume would sooner have parted with his royal State, than with his Learning; for *Wisdom* (saith he) *is the principal thing, therefore get wisdom; and with all thy getting get understanding; and Then I saw* (then, that is, after a serious Disquisition and Discussion of Things, I saw) *that wisdom exceedeth folly* (that is, Knowledge excelleth Ignorance) *as light excelleth darknes.*

These Things and much more may be said of Learning in general; but if more distinctly we survey each Part, and each Object of it, we shall find, that each doth yield considerable Emoluments and Delights; Benefit to our Soul, Advantage to our Life, Satisfaction to our Mind.

The Observation of Things, and Collection of Experiments, how doth it enrich the Mind with *Ideas*, and breed a kind of familiar Acquaintance with all Things, so that nothing doth surprize us, or strike our Mind with Astonishment and Admiration? And if our eye be not satisfied with seeing, nor our ear filled with hearing, how much less is our Mind satiated with the Pleasures of speculating and observing that immense Variety of Objects subject to its View?

The Exercise of our Mind in rational Discursiveness, about things in quest of Truth; canvassing Questions, examining Arguments for and against; how greatly doth it better us, fortifying our Natural Parts, enabling us to fix our Thoughts on Objects without roving, enuring us to weigh and resolve, and judge well about Matters proposed; preserving us from being easily abused by captious Fallacies, gull'd by specious Pretences, tossed about with every Doubt or Objection started before us?

Invention of any kind (in discerning the Causes of abstruse Effects, in resolving hard Problems, in demonstrating Theorems, in framing Composites of witty Description, or forcible Persuasion) how much doth it exceed the Pleasure of hunting for any Game, or of combating for any Victory? Do any Man's Children so much please him, as these Creatures of his Brain?

The reading of Books what is it, but conversing with the wisest Men of all Ages and all Countries, who thereby communicate to us their most deliberate Thoughts, choicest Notions, and best Inventions, couched in good Expression, and digested in exact Method?

And as to the particular Matters or Objects of Study, all have their Use and Pleasure. I shall only touch them.

The very initial Studies of *Tongues* and *Grammatical* Literature are very profitable and necessary, as the Inlets to Knowledge, whereby we are enabled to understand wise Men speaking their Sense in their own Terms and lively Strain, whereby especially we are assisted to drink sacred Knowledge out of the Fountains, the Divine Oracles.

Luther would not part with a little *Hebrew* he had for all the *Turkish* Empire.

Rhetorick, or the Part of conveying our Thoughts to others by Speech with Advantages of Clearness, Force and Elegancy, so as to instruct, to persuade, to delight the Auditors; of how great Benefit is it, if it be well used? How much may it conduce to the Service of God, and Edification of Men? What hath been a more effectual Instrument of doing good, and working Wonders not only in the World, but in the Church? How many Souls have been converted from Error, Vanity and Vice, to Truth, Soberness and Vertue, by an Eloquent *Apollos*, a *Basil*, a *Chrysostome*?

^{Ἰσὺς λόγιος}
^{ὁ διδάσκων}
Acts 18. 24.

The Perusal of *History*, how pleasant Illumination of Mind, how useful Direction of Life? How sprightly Incentives to Vertue doth it afford? How doth it supply the room of Experience, and furnish us with Prudence at the Expence of others,

others, informing us about the ways of Action, and the Consequences thereof by Examples, without our own Danger or Trouble? How may it instruct and encourage us in Piety, while therein we trace the Paths of God in Men, or observe the Methods of Divine Providence, how the Lord and Judge of the World in due season protecteth, prospereth, blesteth, rewardeth Innocence and Integrity? How he crosseth, defeateth, blasteth, curseth, punisheth Iniquity and Outrage; managing things with admirable Temper of Wisdom to the Good of Mankind, and Advancement of his own Glory?

The *Mathematical Sciences*, how pleasant is the Speculation of them to the Mind? How useful is the Practice to common Life? How do they whet and excite the Mind? How do they inure it to strict Reasoning, and patient Meditation?

Natural Philosophy, the Contemplation of this great Theatre, or visible System presented before us; observing the various Appearances therein, and inquiring into their Causes; reflecting on the Order, Connexion and Harmony of Things; considering their original Source, and their final Design: How doth it enlarge our Minds, and advance them above vulgar Amusements, and the Admiration of those petty Things, about which Men cark and bicker? How may it serve to work in us pious Affections of Admiration, Reverence and Love toward our great Creator, whose *eternal Divinity is clearly seen*, whose *glory is declared*, whose transcendent Perfections and Attributes of immense Power, Wisdom and Goodness are conspicuously displayed, whose particular Kindness toward us Men doth evidently shine in those his Works of Nature? Rom. i. 20.
Psal. 19. 1.
Psal. 8.

The Study of *Moral Philosophy*, how exceedingly beneficial may it be to us, suggesting to us the Dictates of Reason, concerning the Nature and Faculties of our Soul, the chief Good and End of our Life, the Way and Means of attaining Happiness, the best Rules and Methods of Practice; the Distinctions between Good and Evil, the Nature of each Vertue, and Motives to embrace it; the Rank wherein we stand in the World, and the Duties proper to our Relations; by rightly understanding and estimating which things we may know how to behave our selves decently and soberly toward our selves, justly and prudently toward our Neighbours; we may learn to correct our Inclinations, to regulate our Appetites, to moderate our Passions, to govern our Actions, to conduct and wield all our Practice well in Prosecution of our End; so as to enjoy our Being and Conveniencies of Life in constant Quiet and Peace, with Tranquility and Satisfaction of Mind?

But especially the Study of *Theology*, how numberless, unexpressible Advantages doth it yield? For,

It enlightneth our Minds with the best Knowledge concerning the most high and worthy Objects in order to the most happy End, with the firmest Assurance.

It certainly and perfectly doth inform us concerning the Nature and Attributes, the Will and Intentions, the Works and Providence of God.

It fully declareth to us our own Nature, our Original, our design'd End, our whole Duty, our certain Way of attaining eternal Life and Felicity.

It exactly teacheth us how we should demean our selves in all respects piously toward God, justly and charitably toward our Neighbour, soberly toward our selves; without Blame in the World, with Satisfaction of our Conscience, with assured Hope of blessed Rewards.

It propoeth those Encouragements, and exhibiteth Assurances of those Helps, which serve potently to engage us in all good Practice.

It setteth before us a most compleat and lively Pattern of all Goodness; apt most clearly to direct, most strongly to excite, most obligingly to engage us thereto; especially instructing and inclining to the Practice of the most high and hard Duties, Meekness, Humility, Patience, Self-denial, Contempt of all worldly Vanities.

It discovereth those sublime Mysteries and stupendous Wonders of Grace, whereby God hath demonstrated an Incomprehensible Kindness to Mankind, and our Obligation to correspondent Gratitude. 1 Pet. i. 12.
Tit. 3. 4.

It representeth manifold Arguments and Incentives to love God with most intense Affection, to confide in him with most firm Assurance, to delight in him continually *with joy unspeakable*; which are the noblest, the sweetest, the happiest Operations of our Soul.

1 Cor. 4. 8. It reareth our Hearts from vain Thoughts, and mean Desires concerning these poor, transitory, earthly things, to Contemplations, Affections, and Hopes toward Objects most excellent, eternal and celestial.

It engageth us to study the Book of God, the Book of Books, the richest Mine of most excellent Knowledge, containing infallible Oracles of Truth, and heavenly Rules of Life; which are able to make us wise to salvation, and perfect to every good work.

2 Tim. 3. 15. Pfal. 19. 10.

And how can we otherwise be so well employ'd, as in Meditation about such things? What Occupation doth nearer approach to that of the blessed Angels? What Heaven is there upon Earth like to that of constantly feasting our Minds and Hearts in the Contemplation of such Objects? Especially considering that this Study doth not only yield private Benefit to our selves in forwarding our own Salvation; but enableth us by our Guidance and Encouragement to promote the eternal Welfare of others, and by our Endeavours to people Heaven, according to that

1 Tim. 4. 16. Exhortation of St. Paul pressing on Timothy this Study with Diligence; *Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them, that thy profiting may appear to all; take heed unto thyself, and unto the Doctrine, continue in them; for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.*

So considerable is each Part of Learning, so extremely profitable are some Parts of it: Indeed the Skill of any liberal Art is valuable, as a handsome Ornament, as a harmless Divertisement, as an useful Instrument upon Occasions; as preferable to all other Accomplishments and Advantages of Person or Fortune (Beauty, Strength, Wealth, Power or the like;) for who would not purchase any kind of such Knowledge at any Rate; who would sell it for any Price; who would not chuse rather to be deformed or impotent in his Body, than to have a misshapen and weak Mind; to have rather a lank Purse than an empty Brain; to have no Title at all, than no Worth to bear it out? If any would, he is not of Solomon's Mind; for of Wisdom (by which he meaneth a Comprehension of all Knowledge, Divine and Human; into which the Knowledge of Natural things, of Mathematicks, of Poetry, are reckon'd Ingredients) he saith, *The merchandize of it is better than the merchandize of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold; she is more precious than rubies, and all the things thou canst desire, are not to be compared unto her: Her fruit is better than gold, yea, than fine gold; and her revenue than choice silver.*

1 Kings 4. 29

Prov. 2. 14. 8. 11.

Prov. 8. 19. 16. 16. 20. 15. 4. 7.

Now then, considering all these Advantages of our Calling, if we by our Negligence or Sluggishness therein do lose them, are we not very ingrateful to God who gave them, as with a gracious Intent for our Good, so with Expectation that we should improve them to his Service? If God had allotted to us the Calling of Rusticks, or of Artificers, we had been impious in not diligently following it, but we are abominably ingrateful in neglecting this most incomparably excellent Vocation.

Are we not extremely defective to our selves, if, indulging a wretched Humour of Laziness, we will not enjoy those sweet Pleasures, nor embrace those great Profits to which God in Mercy calleth us?

Prov. 19. 8. If Solomon said true, *He that getteth wisdom, loveth his own soul, he that keepeth understanding shall find good*; how little Friends are we to our selves, how neglectful of our own Welfare, by not using the Means of getting Wisdom?

Prov. 15. 14. *The heart of him that hath understanding seeketh knowledge, saith Solomon*; what a Fool then is he that shunneth it? Who, though it be his way and his special Duty to seek it, yet neglecteth it; chusing rather to do nothing, or to do worse.

And do we not deserve great Blame, Displeasure and Disgrace from Mankind, if, having such Opportunities of qualifying our selves to do Good, and serve the Publick, we by our Idleness render our selves worthless and useless?

How, being slothful in our Business, can we answer for our violating the Wills, for abusing the Goodness, for perverting the Charity and Bounty of our worthy Founders and Benefactors, who gave us the good things we enjoy, not to maintain us in Idleness, but for Supports and Encouragements of our Industry? How can we excuse our selves from Dishonesty and perfidious Dealing, seeing that we are admitted to these Enjoyments under Condition, and upon Confidence (confirmed by our free Promises and most solemn Engagements) of using them according to their

their pious Intent, that is in a diligent Prosecution of our Studies, in order to the Service of God, and of the Publick?

Let every Scholar, when he mispendeth an Hour, or sludgeth on his Bed, but imagine that he heareth the Voice of those glorious Kings or venerable Prelates, or worthy Gentlemen complaining thus, and rating him; Why, Sluggard, dost thou against my Will possess my Estate? Why dost thou presume to occupy the Place due to an industrious Person? Why dost thou forget or despise thy Obligation to my Kindness? Thou art an Usurper, a Robber, or a Purloiner of my Goods, which I never intended for such as thee; I challenge thee of Wrong to my self, and of Sacrilege toward my God, to whose Service I devoted those his Gifts to me.

How reproachful will it be to us, if that Expostulation may concern us, *Wherefore is there a price in the hand of a fool to get wisdom, seeing he hath no heart to it?* Prov. 17. 16.

If to be a Dunce or a Bungler in any Profession be shameful, how much more ignominious and infamous to a Scholar to be such? From whom all Men expect, that he should excel in intellectual Abilities; and be able to help others by his Instruction and Advice.

Nothing surely would more grate on the Heart of one that hath a Spark of Ingenuity, of Modesty, of generous good Nature, than to be liable to such an Imputation.

To avoid it therefore (together with all the Guilt, and all the Mischiefs attending on Sloth) let each of us in God's Name, carefully mind his Business: And let the Grace and Blessing of God prosper you therein. *Amen.*

S E R M O N XXIII.

The Unsearchableness of GOD'S J U D G M E N T S.

R O M. XI. 33.

How unsearchable are his Judgments, and his ways past finding out!

TH E S E Words are the Close of a Disputation, wherein St. Paul was engaged with the Advocates of *Judaism*, concerning God's Providence toward his ancient People, in rejecting the greatest Part of them upon their Refusal to embrace the *Christian* Doctrine; and in admitting the *Gentile* World to favour, upon its Compliance with the Overtures thereof proposed in the *Gospel*. In this Proceeding those *Infidels* could not discern God's Hand, nor would allow such a Dispensation worthy of him, advancing several Exceptions against it: God (said they) having espoused and consecrated us to himself; having to our Fathers, in regard to their Piety, made so absolute Promises of Benediction on their Posterity; having consequently endowed us with such Privileges and choice Pledges of his Favour, having taken so much Pains with us, and performed so great things in our Behalf; having so long avowed, supported, and cherished us; how can it well consist with his Wisdom, with his Justice, with his Fidelity, with his Constancy thus instantly to abandon and repudiate us? Doth not this Dealing argue his former Affections to have been mis-placed? Doth it not implead his ancient Covenant and Law of Imperfection? Doth it not supplant his own Designs, and unravel all that he for many Ages hath been doing? Upon such Accounts did this Dispensation appear very strange and scandalous to them: But

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St. Paul being infallibly assured of its Truth, doth undertake to vindicate it from all Misprisions, rendering a fair Account of it, and assigning for it many satisfactory Reasons, drawn from the general Equity of the Case, from the Nature of God, his Attributes, and his Relations to Men; from the Congruity of this Proceeding to the Tenour of God's Providence, to his most ancient Purposes, to the true Intent of his Promises, to his expresse Declarations and Predictions; to the State of things in the World, and the pressing Needs of all Mankind: Such Reasons (I say, which I have not time more explicitly to relate) doth the Apostle produce in favour of this great Dispensation; the which did suffice to clear and justify it from all their Objections; yet notwithstanding after that he had steered his Discourse through all these Rocks, he thought it safe to cast Anchor; winding up the Contest in this modest Intimation, that whatever he could say, might not perhaps exhaust the Difficulty, or void all Scruple; that therefore in this and in all such Cases, for entire Satisfaction, we should have Recourse to the incomprehensible Wisdom of God, who frequently in the course of his Providence doth act upon Grounds, and ordereth things in Methods transcending our Ability to discover or trace: To consider some Causes and Reasons of which Incomprehensibility, and to ground thereon some practical Advices, will be the Scope of my Discourse: The Reasons may be these;

1. As the Dealings of very wise Men sometimes are founded upon Maxims, and admit Justifications not obvious, nor penetrable by vulgar Conceit; so may God act according to Rules of Wisdom and Justice; which it may be quite impossible by our Faculties to apprehend, or with our Means to descry.

As there are natural Modes of Being and Operation (such as God's necessary Subsistence, his Production of Things from Nothing, his Eternity without Succession, his Immensity without Extention, his Prescience without Necessitation of Events, his ever acting, but never changing; and the like) so there may be prudential and moral Rules of proceeding far above our Reach, so God himself telleth us: *As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.* Some of them we may be incapable to know, because of our finite Nature; they being peculiar Objects of Divine Wisdom, and not to be understood by any Creature: For as God cannot impart the Power of doing all things possible, so may he not communicate the Faculty of knowing all things intelligible; that being indeed to ungod himself, or to deprive himself of his peerless Supremacy in Wisdom; hence is he stiled *the only wise God*; hence is he said to *dwell in light inaccessible*; hence he *chargeth the Angels with folly*; hence the most illuminate Seraphims do veil their Faces before him.

Other such Rules we may not be able to perceive from the Meanness of our Nature, or our low Rank among Creatures; for beneath Omniscience there being innumerable Forms of Intelligence, in the lowest of these we sit, one Remove from Beasts; being endowed with Capacities suitable to that inferiour Station, and to those meaner Employments, for which we were designed and framed; whence our Mind hath a Pitch, beyond which it cannot soar; and things clearly intelligible to more noble Creatures, moving in a higher Orb, may be dark and unexplicable to us: *As an Angel of God, so is my Lord the King, to discern good and bad,* was an Expression importing this Difference, how those glorious Creatures do overtop us in intellectual Capacities.

Also divers Notions not simply passing our Capacity to know, we are not yet in Condition to ken, by reason of our Circumstances here, in this dark Corner of things, to which we are confined, and wherein we lie under many Disadvantages of attaining Knowledge: He that is shut up in a close Place, and can only peep through Chinks, who standeth in a Valley, and hath his Prospect intercepted, who is encompassed with Foggs, who hath but a dusky Light to view things by, whose Eyes are weak or foul, how can he see much or far, how can he discern things remote, minute or subtile, clearly and distinctly? Such is our Case; our Mind is pent up in the Body, and looketh only through those Clefs by which Objects strike our Sense; its Intuition is limited within a very small Compass; it resideth in an Atmosphere of Fancy, stult with Exhalations from Temper, Appetite, Passion, Interest; its Light is scant and feint (for Sense and Experience do reach only some few gross Matters of Fact, Light infused, and Revelation imparted to us, proceed from arbitrary Dispensation, in definite Measures) our Ratiocination con-

consequently from such Principles, must be very short and defective; nor are our Minds ever thoroughly found, or pure and defecate from Prejudices; Hence no Wonder, that now we are wholly ignorant of divers great Truths, or have but a glimmering Notion of them, which we may, and hereafter shall come fully and clearly to understand; so that even the Apostles, the Secretaries of Heaven might say, *We know in part, and we prophesie in part; We now see through a glass darkly, but then face to face.* 1 Cor. 13. 9, 12.

In fine, those Rules of Equity or Experience, which we in our Transactions with one another do use (being derived from our Original Inclinations to like some good things, or from Notions stamped on our Soul when God made us according to his Image, from common Experience, from any kind of rational Collection, from the Prescription of God's Word) if they be applied to the Dealings of God will be found very incongruous, or deficient; the Case being vastly altered from that infinite Distance in Nature and State between God and us; and from the immense Differences which his Relations toward us have from our Relations to one another.

Wherefore in divers Enquiries about Providence, to which our Curiosity will stretch it, it is impossible for us to be resolved, and launching into them, we shall soon get out of our Depth, so as to swim in Dissatisfaction, or to sink into Distrust: Why God made the World at such an Instant, no sooner or later; why he made it thus, not exempt from all Disorder; why he framed Man (the Prince of visible Creatures) so fallible and frail; so prone to Sin, so liable to Misery; why so many things happen offensive to him, why his Gifts are distributed with such Inequality? Such Questions we are apt to propound and to debate; but the Resolution of them our Mind perhaps was not made to apprehend, nor in its most elevate Condition shall attain it; however in this State we by no means can come at it; it at least being kept close from us among those things, of which it is said, *The secret things belong unto the Lord our God, in distinction from others, about which it is added, But those that are revealed, belong unto us and to our children for ever.* Deut. 29. 30.

In such Cases the absolute Will, the Sovereign Authority, the pure Liberality of God do supply the Place of Reasons; sufficient, if not to satisfy the Minds of Men fondly curious, yet to stop the Mouths of those, who are boldly peremptory: The which are alledged, not with intent to imply that God ever acteth unaccountably, or without highest Reason, but that sometimes his Methods of acting are not fit Subjects of our Conception or Discussion; for otherwhile God appealeth to the Verdict of our Reason; when the Case is such that we can apprehend it, and the Apprehension of it may conduce to good Purposes.

2. As the standing Rules of God's acting, so the occasional Grounds thereof are commonly placed beyond the Sphere of our Apprehension.

God is obliged to prosecute his own immutable Decrees; *working all things, as the Apostle saith, according to the counsel of his own will*; which how can we any-wise come to discover? Can we climb up above the Heaven of Heavens, and there unlock his Closet, rifle his Cabinet, and peruse the Records of everlasting Destiny, by which the World is governed? No, *Who knoweth his mind, or hath been his counsellor? Who, saith the Prophet, hath stood in the counsel of the Lord; or hath perceived and heard his word?* Rom. 9. 20. Isa. 45. 9. Gen. 18. 25. Ezek. 18. 25. Isa. 5. 3. Eph. 1. 11. Rom. 11. 34. Isa. 40. 13. Jer. 23. 18. Sap. 9. 13.

He doth search the hearts, and try the reins of men; he doth weigh their spirits, and their works; he doth know their Frame, he doth understand their thoughts afar off; he perceiveth their closest Intentions, their deepest Contrivances, their most retired Behaviours; he consequently is acquainted with their true Qualifications, Capacities and Merits; unto which he most justly and wisely doth accommodate his Dealings with them; the which therefore must often thwart the Opinions and Expectations of us, who are ignorant of those Particulars, and can only view the exterior Face or Semblance of things: For (as Samuel, in the case of preferring David before his Brethren, did say) *God seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh at the outward appearance, but Good looketh on the heart.*

God also hath a perfect Foresight of contingent Events; he seeth upon what Pin each Wheel moveth, and with what Weight every Scale will be turned; he discerneth all the Connections, all the Entanglements of things, and what the Result

* Prov. 16. 2. Isa. 26. 7.
1 Sam. 2. 3. Psal. 103. 14. 139.
2. 64. 6.
Job 14. 16.
Ἡμεῖς μὲν οὖν μόνα ὁρῶμεν τὰ περὶ
ματα· ὁ δὲ τῶν ὅλων Θεός, ἢ τῶν ταῦτα
δράντων ἐπιστάται ἡ σκόπη, ἢ τέτω
μᾶλλον, ἢ τοῖς ἔργοις δικάζων ἐκφίσει ἢ
ψῆφον. Theod. Ep. 3.

1 Sam. 16. 7.

Isa. 45. 11.

will be upon the Combination, or the Clashing of numberless Causes ; in Correspondence to which Perceptions he doth order things consistently and conveniently , whereas we being stark-blind, or very dim-sighted in such respects (seeing nothing future, and but few things present) cannot apprehend what is fit and feasible ; or why that is done, which appeareth done to us.

God observeth in what relations, and what degrees of Comparison (as to their Natures, their Vertues, their Consequences) all things do stand, each toward others ; so poising them in the Balance of right Judgment, as exactly to distinguish their just Weight and Worth ; whereas we cannot tell what things to compare, we know not how to put them into the Scale, we are unapt to make due Allowances, we are unable to discern which side doth overweigh : In the immense Variety of Objects our Knowledge doth extend to few things eligible, nor among them can we pick out the best Competitors for our Choice : Hence often must we be at great Losses in scanning the Designs, or tracing the Footsteps of Providence.

3. We are also incapable thoroughly to discern the Ways of Providence from our moral Defects, in some measure common to all Men ; from our Stupidity, our Sloth, our Temerity, our Impatience, our Impurity of Heart, our Perverseness of Will and Affections : We have not the Perspicacity to espy the subtle Tracts, and secret Reserves of Divine Wisdom ; we have not the Industry, with steady Application of Mind, to regard and meditate on God's Works ; we have not the Temper and Patience to wait upon God, until he discover himself in the Accomplishment of his Purposes ; we have not that *blessed purity of heart*, which is requisite to the *seeing God* in his special Dispensations, we have not that Rectitude of Will and Government of our Passions, as not to be scandalized at what God doeth, if it thwarteth our Conceit or Humour ; such Defects are observable in the best Men ; who therefore have misapprehended, have disrelished, have fretted and murmured at the Proceedings of God ; we might instance in *Job*, in *David*, in *Elias*, in *Jonah*, in the holy *Apostles* themselves, by whose Speeches and Deportments in some Cases, it may appear how difficult it is for us, who have *eyes of flesh* (as *Job* speaketh) and Hearts too never quite freed of Carnality, to see through, or fully to acquiesce in the Dealings of God.

It is indeed a Distemper incident to us, which we can hardly shun, or cure, that we are apt to measure the Equity and Expedience of things according to our Opinions and Passions ; affecting consequently to impose on God our silly Imaginations as Rules of his Proceeding, and to constitute him the Executioner of our sorry Passions ; what we conceit fit to be done, that we take God bound to perform ; when we feel our selves stirred, then we presume God must be alike concerned : To our Apprehensions every slight Inconvenience is a huge Calamity, every Scratch of Fortune is a ghastly Wound ; God therefore, we think, should have prevented it, or must presently remove it ; every pitiful Bauble, every trivial Accommodation is a Matter of high Consequence, which if God withhold, we are ready to clamour on him ; and wail as Children for want of a Trifle. Are we

4. Luke 9. 55. foundly angry or enflamed with Zeal ? Then *fire must come down from heaven*, then Thunder-bolts must fly about, then nothing but sudden Woe and Vengeance are denounced : Are we pleased ? Then Showers of Blessings must descend on the Heads ; then Floods of Wealth must run into the Laps of our Favourites, otherwise we are not satisfied ; and scarce can deem God awake, or mindful of his Charge. We do beyond Measure hate or despise some Persons, and to those God must not afford any Favour, any Mercy, any Forbearance, or time of Repentance ; we excessively admire or dote on others, and those God must not touch or cross ; if he doth not proceed thus, he is in danger to forfeit his Authority : He must hardly be allowed to govern the World, in case he will not square his Administrations to our fond Conceit, or froward Humour : Hence no wonder, that Men often are stumbled about Providence ; For God will not rule according to their Fancy or Pleasure (it would be a mad World if he should) neither indeed could he do so if he would, their Judgments and their Desires being infinitely various, inconsistent and repugnant. Again,

4. The Nature of those Instruments which Divine Providence doth use in the Administration of Human Affairs, hindereth us from discerning it : It is an

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Observation among *Philosophers*, that the Footsteps of divine Wisdom are, to Exclusion of doubt, far more conspicuous in the Works of Nature, than in the Management of our Affairs; so that some who by Contemplation of natural Appearances were convinced of God's Existence and his Protection of the World (who thence could not doubt but that an immense Wisdom had erected the beautiful Frame of Heaven and Earth, had ranged the Stars in their Order and Courses; had formed the Bodies and Souls of *Animals*, had provided for the Subsistence and Propagation of each *Species*, had settled and doth uphold the visible World in its so comely and convenient State, that even such Men) reflecting on the Course of Human Transactions, have staggered into Distrust, whether a Divine Wisdom doth sit at the Helm of our Affairs; many thence hardly would admit God to be concerned in them, but supposed him to commit their Conduct to a fatal Swinge, or a casual Fluctuation of obvious Causes: One great Reason of this Difference may be, that whereas the Instruments of Divine Power in Nature, are in themselves merely passive, or act only as they are acted by pure Necessity (as a Pen in Writing or a Hammer in striking) being thence determinate, uniform, constant and certain in their Operation; whenever there any Footsteps of Counsel, any Tendency to an End, and Deviation from the common Tracks of Motion do appear, such Effects cannot reasonably be imputed merely to natural Causes, but to a superiour Wisdom, wielding them in such a manner, and steering them to such a Mark: But the visible Engines of Providence in our Affairs are self-moving Agents, working with Knowledge and Choice; the which, as in themselves they are indeterminate, irregular and uncertain, so they are capable to be diversified in numberless unaccountable Ways according to various Representations of Objects, or by Influence of divers Principles inclining to judge and chuse differently: Temper, Humour, Passion, Prejudice, Custom, Example, together with Contingencies of Occasion (depending on like Principles in adjacent free Causes) do move singly or combinedly, in Ways so implicate, to the various Production of so various Events, that nothing hardly can fall out, which may not with some plausible Colour of Reason be derived from some one of those Sources, or from a Complication of them: Nothing can appear so uncouth or extravagant, which may not be fathered on some Fetch of Wit, or some Hit of Fancy, or Capricio of Humour, or some Transport of Passion, or some lucky Advantage, or on divers of those conspiring; whence in accounting for the Reason of such Events, Men deem they may leave out Providence as superfluous; especially considering, that usually Disorders and Defects, only imputable to Man's Will, do accompany and further such Events.

For Instance, what other Cause would many think needful to assign for the Conveyance of *Joseph* into *Egypt*, than the Envy of his Brethren; for *Shimei's* reviling *David*, than his base Malignity; for *David's* numbering the People, than his wanton Pride; for *Jeroboam's* Revolt, than his unruly Ambition; for *Job's* being robb'd, than the thievish Disposition of the *Arabs*; for his being diseased, than a Redundance of bad Humours; for our *Lord's* Suffering, than the spiteful Rage of the *Jewish* Rulers and People; together with the treacherous Avarice of *Judas*, and the corrupt Easiness of *Pilate*? These Events all of them are ascribed to God's Hand, and special Ordination; but Men could not see or avow it in them; what need, will Men ever say, in such Cases to introduce God's Aid, when human Means suffice to atchieve the Feat?

5. Indeed, as in Nature, the Influences of Heaven, and of inferiour Causes so commonly in the Production of these Events, divine and human Agency are so knit and twisted one with the other, that it is not easie to discriminate them, so as to sever the Bounds of common and special Providence; or to discern what God performeth by natural Instruments, what by superiour Efficacy; when the Balance turneth from our Inclinations, when it is cast from a Grain thrown in by divine Interposition; the Management of these Affairs being a Consort, wherein God's Wisdom beareth one Part, Man's Free-will playeth another; Fortune and Occasion also do strike in, we not seeing the first, are prone to ascribe all the Harmony to the last, which are most obvious and visible.

*Nam cum disposui quæsissem fœdera mundi,
Præscriptæque mari fines —
— rursus omnia rebar
Consilio firmata Dei —
Sed cum res hominum tanta caligine
volvî
Adspicerem —
— rursus labefacta cadebat
Religio, &c.*

*Claud. in Ruff. 1.
Diod. Sic. lib. 15. p. 482.*

*Θεὸς μὲν πάντα, καὶ μὴ Θεὸν τύχη καὶ
καὶ τὰ ἀνθρώπινα κυβερνᾷσι ἐν μὲν
τα. Max. Tyr. diff. 3. ἐ Plat.*

6. The more apt are we to do thus, because the manner of Divine Efficacy is ever very soft and gentle : God disposeth Things *fortiter & suaviter* ; so as effectually to perform what he designeth, but in the most sweet and easie way : His Providence doth not hurry along like an impetuous rumbling Torrent, but glideth on as a smooth and still Current, with an irresistible, but imperceptible Force carrying things down therewith : Without much ado, without any Clatter, by a Nod of his Head, by a Whisper of his Mouth, by a Turn of his Hand, he doth effect his Purposes : Winding up a close Spring, he setteth the greatest Wheels in Motion ; and thrusting in an insensible Spoke, he stoppeth the greatest Wheels in their Career ; injecting a Thought, exciting an Humour, presenting an Occasion, insinuating a petty Accident, he bringeth about the most notable Events. He doth so *fashion the hearts of men*, so *manage their hands*, so *guide their steps*, that they who are

acted by him cannot feel the least Touch upon them. For, *The King's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of waters, he turneth it wheresoever he will* ; that is, by secret Pipes, by obscure Channels God conveyeth the Minds and Wills of greatest Persons (the chief Engines of his Providence) unto such Points of Resolution as he pleaseth, so that they seem to flow thither of their own accord, without any exteriour Direction or Impulse : Hence do his most effectual Operations slip by us without making Impression on our Minds, which are wont to apprehend things, as with a gross Palpability they do incur the Senses, so that the Preacher, comparing the Methods of Providence with the most occult Proceedings in Nature, might well say, *As thou knowest not the way of the spirit, nor how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child, so thou knowest not the works of God, who maketh all.* Again,

7. God in his Progress toward the Atchievement of any Design, is not wont to go in the most direct and compendious ways, but commonly windeth about, and taketh a large compass, enfolding several other co-incident Purposes, some whereof may be no less considerable, than is that, which we deem most necessary, and affect to see dispatched ; but this Course seemeth tedious to us, who have not the Wit to perceive that Complexion of Ends, nor the Temper to wait for the Completion of them. If God, when we seem to need, doth not instantly appear in our Favour and Succour, if he doth not presently vindicate Truth and Right ; if he doth not nip wicked Designs in the Bud, and repress the first Onsets of outrageous Violence ; if for a while he suffereth the *tabernacles of robbers to prosper*, and *iniquity to lift up its horn* ; then he is in a Slumber, quite unmindful or insensible of us ; then he turneth aside his Face, or doth behold what passeth, as an unconcerned Spectator ; then he standeth aloof ; unready to help us ; then doth he hold off his Hand,

Sil. Ital.

Psal. 13. 1. 89. 46. 90. 13. 74. 10.

44. 24. 55. 1. 94. 3. 35. 17.

Psal. 35. 17. Psal. 44. 23. 35. 23. 7. 6.

Psal. 74. 11. Psal. 10. 1.

Psal. 90. 13. 6. 4. 7. 7. 80. 14.

Psal. 22. 1. 11. 19. 38. 2. 71. 12.

Vid. Hab. 1. 2

not meddling in our Affairs ; in such Cases we are apt to cry out, *Estis ubi ? O superi ! How long, O Lord, wilt thou forget ; how long wilt thou hide thy face ? Lord, how long wilt thou look on ? Awake, why sleepest thou, O Lord ? why standest thou afar off ? why withdrawest thou thy hand ? pluck it out of thy bosom : Return, O Lord, how long ?* Such are our Prayers, such our Expostulations ; so is our blind Impatience prone to muse and mutter ;

not considering how many good Designs God is carrying on in a calm and steady Pace, by well measured Steps, all which, in due season, when they are ripe for Accomplishment, shall undoubtedly be effected ; for, *The Lord, as St. Peter saith, is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness, but is long-suffering toward all men*, that is, he certainly will express his faithful Benignity toward good Men, yet so as also to extend his merciful Patience toward others ; he so will tender the Interests of some, as concurrently to procure the Welfare of all, and accordingly will time his Proceedings, allowing the Leisure and Opportunities requisite thereto : He can, although we cannot, *wait to be gracious* ; for as in him there are no Passions to precipitate Action, so to him there are no sensible Differences of time, *One day being with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.*

8. Again, God (as is the Property of every wise Agent) is wont to act variously, according to the State and Circumstances of things, or to the Dispositions and Capacities of Persons ; so as to do the same thing for different Ends, and different things for the same End ; to apply one Instrument to several Uses, and by several

several Instruments to work out one Purpose : So he afflicteth good Men out of Love, for Trial and Improvement of their Vertues, bad Men in Displeasure, to illustrate his Power and Justice on them ; he encourageth and blesteth the one, he punisheth and curseth the other with Prosperity ; he reclaimeth both from Error and Sin by either of those Methods, as their Temper and their Circumstances do require : Whence it is very difficult for us ever from the kind of Accidents befalling Men to divine how far God is concerned in them, or to what particular Scope they are aimed ; so that well might the *Preacher*, upon a careful Observation of such Occurrences, establish this Rule, *No man knoweth love, or hatred (that is, the special Regard of God toward Men) by all that is before them ; because, All things come alike to all, there is one event to the righteous and to the wicked.* Farther, Eccel. 9. 1, 2.

9. There are different Ends which Providence in various Order and Measure doth pursue, which we, by reason of our dim Insight and short Prospect cannot descry : God, as the Universal and perpetual Governour of the World, in his Dispensation of things, respecteth not only the Good of this or that Person, of one Nation or one Age ; but often in some degree waving that, or taking care for it in a less remarkable Way, hath a provident Regard to the more extensive Good of a whole People, of the World, of Posterity ; as he did order his Friend *Abraham* to wander in a strange Land, for the Benefit of his Seed ; *Joseph* to be sold, calumniated, and fettered for the Preservation of his Family ; our Lord to suffer those grievous things for the Redemption of Mankind ; the *Jews* to be rejected for the Salvation of the *Gentiles* : In such Cases pur-blind Men, observing Events to cross particular and present Ends, but not being aware how conducive they may prove to general, remote, and more important Designs, can hardly be satisfied how God should be concerned in them ; the present, or that which lieth adjacent just under our Nose, is all that we can or will consider ; and therefore must be ill Judges of what is done by all-provident Wisdom. Hab. 3. 6.

10. Again, God permitteth things, bad in their own Nature, with regard to their Instrumental Use and Tendency ; for that often the worst things may be ordinarable to the best Ends ; things very bitter may work pleasant Effects ; upon the wildest Stock divine Husbandry can ingraft most excellent Fruit ; Sin really, and Suffering reputedly, are the worst Evils, yet from them much Glory to God, and great Benefit to Men do accrue ; even from the most wicked Act that ever was committed, from the most lamentable Event that ever did happen, Fruits admirably glorious, and immensely beneficial did spring ; yet usually so blind are we as to be offended at such Things, and from them to raise Exceptions against Providence.

11. Also the Expediency of things to be permitted or crossed, doth frequently consist, not in themselves singly taken, as particular Acts or Events, but in their Conjunction, or Reference to others, with which they may become subservient toward a common End ; so that divers things in themselves extreamly bad, may by Combination or Collision engender good Effects ; and thence prove fit Weapons or Tools of Providence ; as the most deadly Poisons may be so mixed, that curbing one another's Force, they may constitute a harmless Mass, sometimes a wholesome Medicine ; but we poring on the simple Ingredients, and not considering how they may be tempered, or how applied by a skilful Hand, can hardly deem the Toleration of them congruous to Wisdom. Farther,

12. That Providence sometimes is obscure and intricate, may be attributed to the Will of God, upon divers good Accounts designing it to be such : *Verily (saith the Prophet) thou art a God that hidest thy self, O God of Israel the Saviour.* Is. 45. 15.
Psal. 89. 46.

God commonly doth not intend to exert his Hand notoriously ; for that whereas every special Interposition of his Hand is in effect a Miracle (surmounting the natural Power, or thwarting the ordinary Course of inferiour Causes) it doth not become him to prostitute his miraculous Power, or to exert it otherwise than upon singular Occasions, and for most weighty Causes : 'tis not conformable to the Tenour of his Administrations to convince Men against their Will, or by irresistible Evidence to wring Perswasion from stubborn or stupid Minds ; but to exercise the Wisdom and to prove the Ingenuity of well-disposed Persons, who upon competent Intimations, shall be capable to spell out, and forward to approve his Proceedings.

13. He will not glare forth in Discoveries so bright as to dazzle, to confound our weak sight ; therefore he veileth his Face with a Cloud, and wrappeth his Power

Hab. 3. 4.
Pfal. 97. 2.
18. 11.

Power in some Obscurity ; therefore clouds and darknes are round about him ; he maketh darknes his secret place ; his Pavilion round about him is dark waters and thick clouds of the sky.

14. He meaneth thereby to improve and exalt our Faith, being the less seen, that he may be the more believed ; Faith never rising higher than when it doth soar to Objects beyond our Sight ; when we can approve God's Wisdom and Justice in Occurrences surmounting our Conceit ; when we can rely upon God's Word and Help, although the Stream of his Proceedings seemeth to cross our Hopes.

15. It is fit also that God many times designedly should act in Ways surpassing our Apprehension, and apt to baffle and puzzle our Reason, that he may appear God indeed, infinitely transcending us in Perfection of Wisdom and Justice ; or that we comprehending the Reason of his Actings, may not imagine our Wisdom

Quod videri communiter, quod comprehendere, quod estimari potest, minus est oculis quibus occupatur, & manibus quibus contaminatur, & sensibus quibus invenitur. Tert. Apol. 17.

Hoc est quod Deum estimari facit, dum estimari non capit. Tert. 16.

comparable, our Justice commensurate to his ; yea, that we in those respects do exceed him ; for *That* (as *Tertullian* discourseth) *which may be seen, is less than the eyes that survey it ; that which may be comprehended, is less than the hands that grasp it ; that which may be valued, is less than the senses which rate it ;* It is God's being inestimable that makes him worthily esteemed ; his being incomprehensible rendreth him adorable.

Job 37. 22,
23, 24.

16. The Obscurity of Providence doth indeed conciliate an awful Reverence toward it ; for Darknes naturally raiseth a Dread of invisible Powers ; we use to go on tremblingly, when we cannot see far about us ; we regard none so much as those, whose Wisdom we find to over-reach ours, and whose Intentions we cannot sound ; it was *Elihu's* Observation, *With God is terrible Majesty, the Almighty we cannot find him out ; —men do therefore fear him.*

Pfal. 78. 34.

17. It is also requisite, that God should dispose many Occurrences, cross to our vulgar Notions, and offensive to our carnal Sense, that we may thence be prompted to think of God, driven to seek him, engaged to mark him interposing in our Affairs ; Men from disorderly and surprizing Accidents preposterously do conceive Doubts about Providence, as if in managing things, nothing odd, or amiss, would occur ; whereas if no such Events did start up, they might be proner to question it, they would at least come to forget or neglect it ; for if human Transactions passed on as do the Motions of Nature, in a smooth Course, without any Rub or Disturbance, Men commonly would no more think of God than they do, when they behold the Sun rising, the Rivers running, the Sea flowing ; they would not depend on his Protection, or have recourse to him for Succour ; it is Difficulty and Distress seizing on them, which compel Men to implore God for Relief, which dispose them to see his Hand reaching it forth unto them ; according to that in the *Psalms* ; *When he slew them, then they sought him, they returned and enquired early after God, they remembered that God was their rock, and the most high God their Redeemer.* Again,

18. It is needful that the present Course of Providence should not be transparently clear and satisfactory, that we may be well assured concerning a future Account, and forced in our Thoughts to recur thither for a Resolution of all such emergent Doubts and Difficulties ; for if all Accompts were apparently stated and discharged here ; if now Right did ever prevail, and Iniquity were suppressed ; if Vertue were duly crowned, and Vice deservedly scourged, who would hope or fear an After-reckoning ?

Chrys. Tom. 7.
p. 15.

This indeed is the grand Cause, why Providence now doth appear so cloudy, that Men consider not how our Affairs have no compleat Determination, or final Issue here ; things now are doing and not done ; in a Progress and Tendency toward somewhat beyond, not in a State of Consistence and Perfection ; this not being the Place of deciding Causes, or dispensing Rewards ; but a State of Probation of Work, of Travel, of Combat, of running for the Prize, of sowing toward the Harvest ; a State of Liberty to follow our own Choice, and to lay the ground of our Doom ; of falling into Sin, and of rising thence by Repentance ; of God's exercising Patience, and exhibiting Mercy : wherefore as we cannot well judge of an artificial Work by its first Draughts, or of a Poem by a few Scenes, but must stay till all be finished or acted through ; so we cannot here clearly discern the entire Congruity of providential Dispensations to the Divine Attributes,

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the *Catastrophe* or utmost Resolution of things is the general Judgment, wherein the deep Wisdom, the exact Justice, the perfect Goodness of God will be displayed to the full Satisfaction or Conviction of all Men; when God's Honour will be thoroughly vindicated, his despised Patience, and his abused Grace will be avenged; every Case will be rightly tried, every Work will be justly recompensed, all Accompts will be set streight; in the mean time divers things must occur, unaccountable to us, looking upon things as they now stand absolutely before us, without Reference to that Day: Considering this may induce us to suspend our Opinion about such Matters, allowing God to go through with his Work before we censure it, not being so quick and precipitate as to forestall his Judgment; and surely would we but observe that reasonable Advice of *St. Paul, Judge nothing before the time until the Lord come*, our chief Doubts would be resolved, our shrewdest Exceptions against Providence would be voided. Rom. 2. 7. 1 Cor. 4. 5.

These are the chief Reasons of the Point, which Meditation did suggest; upon it (for it is not a Point merely speculative, but pregnant with useful Consequences) divers practical Applications may be grounded, which the time scarcely will allow me to name.

1. It should render us modest and sober in our Judgment about providential Occurrences, not pretending thoroughly to know the Reasons of God's Proceedings, Ecclesi. 3. 20. or to define the Consequences of them; for it is plainly fond Arrogance or profane Psal. 131. 1. Imposture to assume perfect Skill in that which passeth our Capacity to learn.

2. It should make us staunch and cautious of grounding Judgment or Censure Luke 13. 1. upon present Events about any Cause, or any Person; for it is notorious Temerity to pass Sentence upon grounds incapable of Evidence.

3. It should repress wanton Curiosity, which may transport us beyond our Job 11. 12. Bounds in Speculation of these mysterious Intrigues; so that we shall lose our Sap. 9. 13. Labour and Time, shall discompose our Minds, shall plunge our selves into vain Job 42. 3. Errors or anxious Doubts.

4. It should keep us from Conceitedness and Confidence in our own Wisdom; Job 40. 4. for how can we conceit highly of that, or much confide in it, which we find so 42. 2. unable to penetrate the Reason of most common and obvious Appearances; so Psal. 73. 22. *non-plust* in its Enquiries, so defeated in its Expectations, so mistaken in its Judgments of things. 39. 9.

5. It should preserve us from Infidelity, and from Despair upon account of any cross Accidents occurring here; for 'tis unreasonable to disbelieve a Notion, otherwise well grounded, because we cannot assail Scruples or Cavils drawn from Matters inscrutable to us; 'tis foolish to despair of a good Event upon Appearances, whereof we cannot apprehend the full Reason, or final Result.

6. It should prevent our taking Offence, or being discontented at any Events 2 Kings 20. 9. rising up before us; for to be displeased at that, which a superiour Wisdom, Mat. 16. 23. unsearchable to us, doth order, is to be displeased at we know not what, or why, which is childish Weakness, to fret and wail at that, which for all we can see, proceedeth from good Intention, and tendeth to good Issue, is pitiful Frowardness.

7. It should guard us from Security, or from presuming upon Impunity for our Ecclesi. 8. 11. Miscarriages: For seeing God doth not always clearly and fully discover his Mind, it is vain from God's Reservedness to conclude his Unconcernedness; or because he is now patient, that he never will be just in chastizing our Offences.

8. It should quicken our Industry in observing and considering the Works of Isa. 26. 11. Providence; for since they are not easily discernible, and the discerning them in 5. 12. some measure is sometimes of great Use, it is needful that we be very diligent in Contemplation of them; the feinter our Light is, the more attent we should be in looking; the knottier the Subject, the more earnest should be our Study on it.

9. It should oblige us to be circumspect and wary in our Conversation; for the darker the Way is, the more careful should be our Walking therein, lest we err, lest we stumble, lest we strike on somewhat hurtful to us.

10. It should engage us constantly to seek God, and to depend on him, for the Jer. 10. 23. Protection and Conduct of his Grace, which is the only Clue, that can lead us safely through this intricate Labyrinth of worldly Contingencies.

11. In fine, it should cause us humbly to admire and adore that Wisdom, which Psal. 36. 6. governeth the World in ways no less great and wonderful than just and holy: 92. 5.

Apo. 15. 3. For Great and marvellous are thy works, O Lord, God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, O thou king of Saints.
 19. 2. Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. AMEN.

SERMON XXIV.

Of Obedience to our Spiritual GUIDES and GOVERNOURS.

H E B. XIII. 17.

Obey them that have the rule over you.

Obedience unto Spiritual Guides and Governours is a Duty of great Importance; the which to declare and press is very seasonable for these times, wherein so little Regard is had thereto; I have therefore pitched on this Text, being an Apostolical Precept, briefly and clearly enjoining that Duty: And in it we shall consider and explain these two Particulars: I. The Persons to whom Obedience is to be payed. II. What that Obedience doth import, or wherein it consisteth: And together with Explication of the Duty, we shall apply it, and urge its Practice.

I. As to the Persons unto whom Obedience is to be performed, they are, generally speaking, all spiritual Guides, or Governours of the Church (those who speak to us the word of God, and who watch for our souls, as they are describ'd in the Context) expressed here by a Term very significant and apposite, as implying fully the Nature of their Charge, the Qualification of their Persons, their Rank and Privileges in the Church, together consequently with the Grounds of Obligation to the correspondent Duties toward them. There are in holy Scripture divers Names and Phrases appropriate to them, each of them denoting some eminent Part of their Office, or some Appurtenance thereto; but this seemeth of all most comprehensive; so that unto it all the rest are well reducible: The Term is ἡγούμενοι, that is, *Leaders, or Guides, or Captains*; which properly may denote the subsequent Particulars in way of Duty, or Privilege appertaining to them.

1. It may denote Eminence of Dignity, or Superiority to others: That they are (as it is said of Judas and Silas in the Acts) ἄνδρες ἡγούμενοι ἐν ἀδελφοῖς, *principal Men among the Brethren*: For to lead, implieth Precedence, which is a Note of Superiority and Preheminence. Hence are they stiled πρεσβύτες, *Presidents or Prelates*; οἱ πρῶτοι, the first or prime Men; οἱ μέζονες, the greater, Majors or Grandees among us: He (saith our Lord) that will be the first among you, let him be your servant; and He that is greater among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve; where ὁ μέζων, and ὁ ἡγούμενος (the greater and the Leader) are Terms equivalent, or interpretative the one of the other; and our Lord in those Places as he prescribeth Humility of Mind and Demeanour, so he implieth Difference of Rank among his Disciples: Whence to render especial Respect and Honour to them, as to our Betters, is a Duty often enjoined.

2. It doth imply Power and Authority: Their Superiority is not barely grounded on personal Worth or Fortune; it serveth not merely for Order, and Pomp; but it standeth upon the Nature of their Office, and tendeth to Use: They are by God's

God's Appointment enabled to exercise Acts of Power ; to command, to judge, to check, controul, and chastise in a spiritual way, in order to spiritual Ends ; (the Regulation of God's Worship and Service, the Preservation of Order and Peace, the promoting of Edification in divine Knowledge, in Holiness of Life) so are they ἡγέμενοι, as that Word in common Use (as the Word ἡγεμῶν of kin to it) doth signifie *Captains* and *Princes* ; importing Authority to command and rule ; whence the *Hebrew* Word נָשִׂא, a *Prince*, is usually rendred by it ; and ὁ ἡγούμενος, is the Title, attributed to our Lord, to expresse his kingly Function, being the same with ἀρχηγός, the *Prince* or *Captain*.) Hence are they otherwise stiled κυβερνήσεις (*Governors*) ἐπιστάται (*Overseers*, or *Superintendents*) as St. Jerome rendreth it) *Pastors* (a Word often signifying *Rule*, and attributed to civil Governours) πρεσβύτεροι (*Elders*, or *Senators* ; the Word denoteth not merely Age, but Office and Authority) οἱ ἐπιμελῆντες, such as take care for, the *Curators* or *Supervisors of the Church* : Hence also they are signally and specially in relation unto God stiled δούλοι (*the Servants*) δίκηνοι (*the Ministers*) ὑπηρέται (*the Officers*) λειτουργοὶ (*the publick Agents*) οἰκονόμοι (*the Stewards*) συνεργοὶ (*the Coadjutors*, or *Assistants*) πρέσβεις (*the Legates*) ἄγγελοι (*the Angels*, or *Messengers*) of God ; which Titles imply, that God by them, as his Substitutes and Instruments, doth administer the Affairs of his spiritual Kingdom ; that as by secular Magistrates (his Vicegerents and Officers) he manageth his universal temporal Kingdom, or governeth all Men in order to their worldly Peace and Prosperity ; so by these spiritual Magistrates he ruleth his Church, toward its spiritual Welfare and Felicity.

3. The Word also doth imply Direction or Instruction ; that is, Guidance of People in the way of Truth and Duty, reclaiming them Error and Sin ; This, as it is a means hugely conducing to the Design of their Office, so it is a principal Member thereof : Whence διδάσκαλοι *Doctors*, or *Masters in Doctrine*, is a common Name of them ; and to be διδασκῆναι, able and apt to teach (ἵκανοὶ διδάσκειν and πρεσβυμοί) is a chief Qualification of their Persons ; and to attend on teaching, to be instant in preaching, to labour in the word and doctrine are their most commendable Performances : Hence also they were called *Shepherds*, because they feed the Souls of God's People with the Food of wholesome Instruction ; *Watchmen*, because they observe Men's ways, and warn them when they decline from right, or run into Danger ; the *Messengers* of God, because they declare God's Mind and Will unto them for the Regulation of their Practice.

4. The Word farther may denote exemplary Practice ; for to lead implieth so to go before, that he who is conducted may follow ; as a Captain marcheth before his Troop ; as a Shepherd walketh before his Flock, as a Guide goeth before the Traveller, whom he directeth ; hence they are said to be, and enjoined to behave themselves, as patterns of the flock ; and the People are charged to imitate and follow them.

Such in general doth the Word here used imply the Persons to be, unto whom Obedience is prescribed ; but there is farther some Distinction to be made among them ; there are Degrees and Subordinations in these Guidances ; some are in regard to different Persons both impowered to guide, and obliged to follow or obey.

The Church is acies ordinata, a well marshalled Army, wherein under the Captain General of our Faith and Salvation (the Head of the Body, the Sovereign Prince and Priest, the Arch-Pastor, the chief Apostle of our profession, and Bishop of our Souls) there are divers Captains serving in fit Degrees of Subordination ; Bishops commanding large Regiments, Presbyters ordering less numerous Companies ; all which by the Bands of common Faith, of mutual Charity, of Holy Communion, and Peace being combined together, do in their respective Stations govern and guide, are governed and guided : The Bishops, each in his Precincts guiding more immediately the Priests subject to them ; the Priests, each guiding the People committed to his Charge ; all Bishops and Priests being guided by Synods established or congregated upon emergent Occasion ; many of them ordinarily by those principal Bishops, who are regularly settled in a Presidency over them ; according to the Distinctions constituted by God and his Apostles, or introduced by Human Prudence, as the Preservation of Order and Peace (in various times and Circumstances of things) hath seemed to require ; to which Subordination the

1 Pet. 5. 5. Eph. 5. 21. Phil. 2. 3.
 Ὑποτασσέσθω ἑκάστω τῷ κυρίῳ ὡς τῷ κυρίῳ τοῦ σώματος
 καὶ ὡς ἐν τῷ κυρίῳ ἐν τῷ σώματι αὐτοῦ.
 Clem. ad Corinth. p. 49.

two great *Apostles* may seem to have regard, when they bid us ὑποτάσσεσθαι ἀλλήλοις, to be subject to one another; their Injunction at least may (according to their general Intent, which aimeth at the Preservation of Order and Peace.) be well extended so far.

Cyp. Ep. 10.
 Ep. 12.

Of this Distinction there was never in ancient times made any question, nor did it seem disputable in the Church, except to one Malecontent (*Arrius*) who did indeed get a Name in Story, but never made much Noise, or obtained any vogue in the World: Very few followers he found in his Heterodoxy; No great Body even of *Hereticks* could find Cause to dissent from the Church in this Point; but all *Arians*, *Macedonians*, *Novatians*, *Donatists*, &c. maintained the Distinction of Ecclesiastical Orders among themselves, and acknowledged the Duty of the inferior Clergy to their Bishops: And no wonder, seeing it standeth upon so very firm and clear grounds; upon the Reason of the Case, upon the Testimony of Holy Scripture, upon general Tradition, and unquestionable Monuments of Antiquity, upon the common Judgment and Practice of the greatest Saints, Persons most renown'd for Wisdom and Piety in the Church.

Reason plainly doth require such Subordinations; for that without them it is scarce possible to preserve any durable Concord, or Charity in Christian Societies; to establish any decent Harmony in the Worship and Service of God, to check odious Scandals, to prevent or repress baneful Factions, to guard our Religion from being overspread with pernicious Heresies, to keep the Church from being shattered into numberless Sects, and thence from being crumbled into nothing; in fine, for any good time to uphold the Profession and Practice of Christianity it self: For how, if there be not settled Corporations of Christian People, having bulk and strength sufficient by joyned endeavour to maintain the truth, honour and interest of their Religion; if the Church should only consist of independent and incoherent Particles (like Dust or Sand) easily scattered by any Wind of opposition from without, or by any Commotion within; if *Christendom* should be merely a *Babel* of confused Opinions and Practices, how, I say, then could Christianity subsist? How could the Simple among so discordant Apprehensions be able to discern the Truth of it, how would the Wise be tempted to dislike it, being so mangled and disfigured? What an Object of Contempt and Scorn would it be to the profaner World, in such a Case? It needeth therefore considerable Societies to uphold it; but no Society (especially of any large extent) can abide in order and peace, under the management of equal and co-ordinate Powers; without a single undivided Authority, enabled to moderate Affairs, and reduce them to a Point, to arbitrate emergent Cases of difference, to put good Orders in execution,

Ecclesie salus in summi Sacerdotis dignitate consistit, cui non exors quadam, & ab omnibus detur eminens potestas, ut in Ecclesia efficiuntur schismata, quot sacerdotes. Hier. in Lucif.

Nec Presbyterorum cætus ritè constitutus dici potest, in quo nullus sit hæmorrhoides. Bez. de Grad. Min. cap. 22.

Essentiale fuit, quod ex Dei Ordinatione perpetua necesse fuit, est, & erit, ut Presbyterio quispiam & loco & dignitate Primus ædifici gubernanda præsit cum eo, quod ipsi divinitus attributum est jure. Bez. de Min. Evang. Grad. t. 23. p. 153.

to curb the Adversaries of Order and Peace; these things cannot be well performed, where there is a Parity of many Concurrents, apt to dissent, and able to check each other; no *Democracy* can be supported without borrowing somewhat from *Monarchy*; no Body can live without a Head; an Army cannot be without a General, a Senate without a President, a Corporation without a Supreme Magistrate: this all Experience attesteth; this even the chief Impugners of *Episcopal* Presidency do by their Practice confess; who for prevention of disorder have been fain of their own Heads to devise Ecclesiastical Subordinations of *Classes*, *Provinces* and *Nations*; and to appoint *Moderators* (or temporary Bishops) in their Assemblies; so that Reason hath forced the Dissenters from the Church to imitate it.

If there be not Inspectors over the Doctrine and Manners of the common Clergy, there will be many who will say and do any thing; they will in teaching please their own Humour, or sooth the People, or serve their own Interests; they will indulge themselves in a licentious manner of Life; they will clash in their Doctrines, and scatter the People, and draw them into Factions.

It is also very necessary for preserving the Unity and Communion of the Parts of the Catholick Church; seeing single Persons are much fitter to maintain correspondence than headless Bodies.

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The very Credit of Religion doth require, that there should be Persons raised above the common Level, and endued with eminent Authority, to whose Care the promoting it should be committed; for such as the Persons are who manage any Profession, such will be the Respect yielded thereto; if the Ministers of Religion be Men of Honour and Authority, Religion it self will be venerable; if *those* be mean, that will become contemptible.

The Holy Scripture also doth plainly enough countenance this Distinction; for therein we have represented one *Angel* presiding over principal Churches, which contained several *Presbyters*; therein we find Episcopal Ordination, and Jurisdiction exercised; we have one Bishop constituting *Presbyters* in divers *Cities* of his *Diocese*; ordering all things therein concerning Ecclesiastical Discipline; judging *Presbyters*, rebuking, *μετὰ πάσης ἐξουσίας*, with all authority (or imperiousness, as it were; *Tit. 2. 15.*) and reconciling Offenders, secluding Hereticks, and scandalous Persons. Apoc. 2, 3. &c. Tit. 1. 5. 1 Tim. 5. 1, 17, 19, 20, 22, &c.

In the *Jewish Church* there were an *High-Priest*, *Chief-Priest*, a *Sanhedrin*, or *Senate*, or *Synod*.

The Government of Congregations among God's ancient People (which it is probable was the Pattern that the *Apostles*, no Affecters of needless Innovation, did follow in establishing Ecclesiastical Discipline among Christians) doth hereto agree; for in their *Synagogues*, answering to our Christian Churches, they had as their *Elders* and *Doctors*, so over them an *ἀρχιεπισκοπῆς*, the *Head of the Eldership*, and *ראש הקהל* *President of the Synagogue*.

The primitive general Use of Christians most effectually doth back the Scripture, and interpret it in favour of this Distinction; scarce less than demonstrating it constituted by the *Apostles*; for how otherwise is it imaginable, that all the *Churches* founded by the *Apostles* in several most distant and disjoined Places (at *Jerusalem*, at *Antioch*, at *Alexandria*, at *Ephesus*, at *Corinth*, at *Rome*) should presently conspire in acknowledgment and use of it? How could it without apparent Confederacy be formed, how could it creep in without notable Clatter, how could it be admitted without considerable Opposition, if it were not in the Foundation of those Churches laid by the *Apostles*? How is it likely, that in those Times of grievous Persecution falling chiefly upon the *Bishops* (when to be eminent among Christians yielded slender Reward, and exposed to extreme Hazard; when to seek Preheminence was in effect to court Danger and Trouble, Torture and Ruin) an Ambition of irregularly advancing themselves above their Brethren should so generally prevail among the ablest and best Christians? How could those famous Martyrs for the Christian Truth be some of them so unconscionable as to affect, others so irrefutable as to yield to such injurious Encroachments? And how could all the Holy Fathers (Persons of so renowned, so approved Wisdom and Integrity) be so blind as not to discern such a Corruption, or so bad as to abett it? How indeed could all God's Church be so weak as to consent in Judgment, so base as to comply in Practice with it? In fine, how can we conceive, that all the best Monuments of Antiquity, down from the beginning (the *Acts*, the *Epistles*, the *Histories*, the *Commentaries*, the *Writings* of all sorts coming from the Blessed *Martyrs*, and most Holy *Confessors* of our Faith) should conspire to abuse us; the which do speak nothing but *Bishops*; long *Catalogues* and rows of *Bishops* succeeding in this and that *City*; *Bishops* contesting for the Faith against *Pagan* Idolaters, and *Heretical* Corrupters of Christian Doctrine; *Bishops* here teaching, and planting our Religion by their Labours, there suffering, and watering it with their Blood.

I could not but touch this Point: But I cannot insist thereon; the full Discussion of it, and Vindication of the Truth from the cavils advanced against the Truth by modern Dissenters from the Church, having employed voluminous Treatises; I shall only further add, That if any Man be so dully, or so affectedly ignorant as not to see the reason of the Case, and the dangerous Consequences of rejecting this ancient Form of Discipline; if any be so overweeningly presumptuous, as to question the Faith of all History, or to disavow those Monuments and that Tradition, upon the Testimony whereof even the Truth and Certainty of our Religion, and all its sacred Oracles do rely; if any be so perversely contentious, as to oppose the Custom, and current Practice of the Churches through all Ages down to the last Age; so self-conceitedly arrogant, as to condemn or slight the Judgment, and Practice of all the Fathers (together also with the Opinion of the later

most grave *Divines*, who have judged Episcopal Presidency needful, or expedient, where practicable) so peevishly refractory as to thwart the settled Order of that Church, in which he was baptized, together with the Law of the Country in which he was born; upon such a Person we may look as one utterly invincible, and intractable: So weak a Judgment, and so strong a Will who can hope by Reason to convert? I shall say no more to that Point.

The *ἡγούμενοι* then (the Guides and Governours) in our *Text* are primarily the *Bishops*, as the superiour and chief Guides, each in his Place according to Order peaceably established; then secondarily the *Presbyters* in their Station as Guides inferior, together with the *Deacons* as their Assistants; such the Church always hath had, and such by God's Blessing, our Church now hath, toward whom the Duty of Obedience is to be performed.

To the Consideration of that I should now proceed, but first it seemeth expedient to remove a main Obstruction to that Performance, which is this; a Misprision, or Doubt concerning the Persons of our Guides and Governours; for in vain it would be to teach or persuade us to obey them, if we do not know who they are, or will not acknowledge them: For as in Religion it is *Primus Deorum cultus Deos credere*, *The first worship of God to believe God* (as *Seneca* saith) so it is the first Part of our Obedience to our Governours to avow them; it is at least absolutely prerequisite thereto. It was of old a Precept of *St. Paul* to the *Thessalonians*: *1 Thess. 5. 12. We beseech you Brethren to know those, who labour among you; and preside over you;* and another to the *Corinthians*; *Submit your selves* (saith he) *to such, and to every one that helpeth with us, and laboureth*—then he subjoineth *ἐμψυχωμεντες τοὺς τοιούτους, acknowledge such*; there were, it seemeth, those in the *Apostolical* Times, who would not know, or acknowledge their Guides; there were even those, who would not admit the *Apostles* themselves (as *St. John* saith of *Diotriches*) who *resisted their words* (as *St. Paul* saith of *Alexander*) to whom the *Apostles* were not *Apostles*, as *St. Paul* intimateth concerning some in regard to himself; there were then *Pseud-apostles*, who excluded the *true Apostles*, intruding themselves into that high Office: No wonder then it may be, that now in these Dregs of Time, there should be many, who disavow, and desert their true Guides, transferring the Observance due to them upon bold Pretenders; who are not indeed Guides, but Seducers; not Governours, but Usurpers, and sacrilegious Invaders of this Holy Office: The Duty we speak of cannot be secured without preventing or correcting this grand Mistake; and this we hope to compass by representing a double Character or Description, one of the *true Guides*, another of the *Counterfeits*, by comparing which we may easily distinguish them, and consequently be induced dutifully to avow and follow the one Sort, wisely to disclaim and decline the other.

Those, I say, then, who constantly do profess, and teach that sound and wholesome Doctrine, which was delivered by our Lord, and his *Apostles* in Word and Writing, was received by their Disciples in the primitive Churches, was transmitted and confirmed by general Tradition, was sealed by the Blood of the blessed *Martyrs*, and propagated by the Labours of the Holy Fathers; the which also manifestly recommendeth and promoteth true Reverence and Piety toward God, Justice and Charity toward Men, Order and Quiet in human Societies, Purity and Sobriety in each Man's private Conversation.

Those who celebrate the true Worship of God, and administer the Holy Mysteries of our Religion in a serious, grave, decent manner, purely and without any notorious Corruption either by hurtful Error, or superstitious Foppery, or irreverent Rudeness, to the Advancement of God's Honour, and Edification of the Participants in Vertue and Piety.

Those who derive their Authority by a continued Succession from the *Apostles*; who are called unto, and constituted in their Office in a regular and peaceable way, agreeable to the Institution of God, and the constant Practice of his Church; according to Rules approved in the best and purest Ages; who are prepared to the exercise of their Function by the best Education, that ordinarily can be provided, under sober Discipline, in the Schools of the Prophets, who thence by competent endowments of Mind, and useful Furniture of good Learning, acquired by painful Study, become qualified to guide and instruct the People: Who after previous Examination of their Abilities, and probable Testimonies concerning their Manners (with regard to the Qualifications of incorrupt Doctrine, and sober Conversation

fation prescribed by the *Apostles*) are adjudged fit for the Office; who also in a ^{1 Tim. 3. 7.} pious, grave, solemn manner, with Invocation of God's Blessing, by *laying on the* ^{10.} *hands of the Presbytery* are admitted thereunto.

Those whose Practice in guiding and governing the People of God is not managed by arbitrary, uncertain, fickle, private Fancies or Humours, but regulated by standing Laws; framed (according to general Directions extant in Holy Scripture) by pious and wise Persons, with mature Advice, in Accommodation to the Seasons and Circumstances of Things for common Edification, Order and Peace.

Those who, by virtue of their good Principles, in their Disposition and Demour appear sober, orderly, peaceable, yielding meek Submission to Government, tending the Churches Peace, upholding the Communion of the Saints, abstaining from all schismatical, turbulent and factious Practices.

Those also, who are acknowledged by the Laws of our Countrey, an Obligation to obey whom is Part of that *human Constitution*, unto which we are in all things (not evidently repugnant to God's Law) indispensibly bound to submit; whom our Sovereign, God's Vicegerent, and the nursing Father of his Church among us (unto whom in all things high Respect, in all lawful things entire Obedience is due) doth command and encourage us to obey:

Those, I say, to whom this Character plainly doth agree, we may reasonably be assured, that they are our true Guides and Governours, whom we are obliged to follow and obey: For what better Assurance can we in reason desire? What more proper Marks can be assigned to discern them by? What Methods of constituting such needful Officers can be settled more answerable to their Design and Use? How can it be evil or unsafe to follow Guides authorized by such Warrants, conformed to such Patterns, endowed with such Dispositions, acting by such Principles and Rules? Can we mistake, or miscarry, by complying with the great Body of God's Church through all Ages, and particularly with those great Lights of the Primitive Church, who by the Excellency of their Knowledge, and the Integrity of their Virtue have so illustrated our Holy Religion?

There are on the other hand sufficiently plain Characters, by which we may descry Seducers, and false Pretenders to guide us.

Those who do *ἐπεροδιδασκεῖν*, *teach otherwise*, or discourse from the good ancient ^{1 Tim. 6. 3.} wholesome, revealed in the Holy Scripture, attested by *Universal Tradition*, professed, ^{1. 3. 4.} taught, maintained to Death by the Primitive Saints and Martyrs; who affect Novel- ^{Gal. 1. 9.} ties, uncouth Notions, big Words, and dark Phrases, who dote on curious ^{1 Tim. 1. 4.} empty Speculations, and idle Questions, which engender Strife, and yield no ^{6. 4. 20.} good Fruit. ^{2 Tim. 2. 14.} ^{16, 23.}

Those who ground their Opinions, and warrant their Proceedings not by clear Testimonies of divine Revelation, by the Dictates of sound Reason, by the current Authority of wise and good Men, but by the Suggestions of their own Fancy, ^{Tit. 3. 9.} by the Impulses of their Passion and Zeal, by Pretences to special Inspiration, by ^{2 Pet. 2. 18.} imaginary Necessities, and such like fallacious Rules. ^{Ipsum ordinatio- nes teme- rariae, incon- stantes, leves, Tertull.}

Those who by counterfeit Shews of mighty Zeal, and extraordinary Affection, by affected Forms of Speech, by pleasing Notions, by prophesying *smooth things*, *daubing* and *glozing*, by various Artifices of Flattery and Fraud attract and abuse weak and heedless People.

Those who without any apparent Commission from God, or allowable Call from Men, or extraordinary necessity of the case, in no legal or regular way, according to no custom received in God's Church, do intrude themselves into the Office, or are only assumed thereto by ignorant, unstable, giddy, factious People, such as those of whom St. Paul saith, that

according to their own Lusts they heap up teachers to themselves, having itching ears. ^{2 Tim. 4. 3.}

Those who are not in reasonable ways fitly prepared, not duly approved, not competently authorized, not orderly admitted to the Office, according to the Prescriptions of God's Word, and the practice of his Church; not entering into the fold by the door, but breaking through, or clambering over the fences of sober Discipline.

Those who in their mind, their principles, their designs, and all their practice appear void of that charity, that meekness, that calmness, that gravity, that sincerity, that stability, which qualifie worthy and true Guides: Who in the dis-
position

Hi sunt qui se ultro apud temerarios convenas sine divina dispositione praeficiunt, qui se praepositos sine ulla ordinatio- nis lege constituunt, qui nemine Episcopatum dante Episcopi sibi nomen assu- munt. Cypr. de Un. Eccl. p. 256.

position of their mind are froward, fierce, and stubborn, in their principles loose and slippery, in their designs and behaviour turbulent, disorderly, violent, deceitful: Who regard not order or peace, but wantonly raise scandals, create dissensions, abett and foment disturbances in the Church. Who under religious appearances indulge their passions, and serve their interests, using a guise of devotion, and talk about holy things as instruments to vent wrath, envy and spleen; to drive forward designs of ambition and avarice; who will not submit to any certain judgment or rule, will like nothing but what their fancy suggests, will acknowledge no law but their own will; who for no just cause, and upon any slender pretence withdraw themselves, and seduce others from the Church in which they were brought up, deserting its Communion, impugning its Laws, defaming its Governours, endeavouring to subvert its Establishment: Who manage their discipline (such as it is of their own framing) unadvisedly and unsteadily, in no stable method, according to no settled rule, but as present conceit, or humour, or advantage prompteth; so that not being fixed in any certain judgment or practice, they soon clash with themselves, and divide from one another; incessantly roving from one Sect to another; *being carried about with divers and strange Doctrines; like Children tossed to and fro with every wind of Doctrine.*

Heb. 13. 9.
Eph. 4. 14.

Those, the fruits of whose Doctrine and Managery amount at best only to empty form of godliness, void of real virtue; while in truth they fill the Minds of Men with ill-passions, ill-surmises, ill-will; they produce impious, unjust and uncharitable dealing of all Kinds, particularly discontentful Murmurings, Disobedience to Magistrates; Schisms and Factions in the Church; Combuitions and Seditions in the State.

2 Tim. 3. 13. In fine those, who in their Temper and their Deportment resemble those ancient Seducers, branded in the Scripture, those *evil Men, who did seduce, and were seduced.*

Tit. 1. 10. Whose dispositions are represented in these *Epithets*: They were ἀνυπότακτοι, unruly, or Persons indisposed and unwilling to submit to Government; πολυμηται, presumptuous and self-willed, or self-pleasing darers; γολυγισται, μελιχολοι, murmurers, complainers, or conjunctly discontented mutiners, αυτοκατακρινται, self-condemned, namely, by contradictory shuffling and shifting, or by excommunicating themselves from the Church; γοηται, bewitchers, inveigling and deluding credulous People by Diffimulation, and specious Appearances; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof; being wolves in sheeps cloathing, grievous wolves not sparing the flock; deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the servants of Christ, and Ministers of righteousness; lovers of themselves, covetous, boasters, proud, revilers, truce-breakers, false-accusers, traitours, heady, high-minded, vain talkers, deceivers, ignorant, unlearned, unstable:

Whose Practices were, To cause divisions and offences contrary to received Doctrine: By good words and fair speeches to deceive the hearts of the simple; —To swerve from charity—having turned aside to vain jangling, desiring to be teachers of the Law, understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm. To beguile unstable Souls; To lie in wait to deceive; To speak perverse things that they may draw Disciples after them; to creep into Houses captivating silly women; To doat about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, perverse disputings; To speak swelling words of vanity; To admire persons because of advantage (or out of private design, for self-interest;) To subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not for filthy lucre's sake; to speak lies in hypocrisie; To preach Christ out of envy and strife, not out of good-will, or pure intention (ἐκ ἀγνῶς, not purely;) To promise liberty to their followers; To walk disorderly (that is, in repugnance to Order settled in the Church;) To despise dominion, and without fear to reproach dignities; To speak evil (rashly) of those things which they know not (which are beside their Skill and Cognizance) To separate themselves from the Church.

Such Persons as these, arrogating to themselves the Office of Guides, and pretending to lead us, we must not follow or regard, but are in reason and conscience obliged to reject and shun them, as the Ministers of Satan, the Pests of Christendom, the Enemies and Murtherers of Souls.

It can indeed no-wise be safe to follow any such Leaders (whatever Pretences to special Illumination they hold forth, whatever specious guises of Sanctity they bear) who in their Doctrine or Practice deflect from the great beaten Roads of holy

holy Scripture, primitive Tradition, and Catholick Practice, roving in bye-paths suggested to them by their private Fancies and Humours, their Passions and Lusts, their Interests and Advantages: there have in all Ages such counterfeit Guides started up, having debauched some few heedless Persons, having erected some *ἑταυρωματῶν*, or petty Combinations against the regularly settled Corporations; but never with any durable success or countenance of Divine Providence; but like prodigious *Meteors*, having caused a little gazing, and some Disturbance, their Sects have soon been dissipated, and have quite vanished away: the Authors and Abettors of them being either buried in Oblivion, or recorded with Ignominy: like that *Theudas* in the Speech of *Gamaliel*; who rose up boasting himself to be somebody; to whom a number of Men about four hundred joined themselves; who was slain, and all as many as obeyed him, were scattered, and brought to nought. Jude 13.
Acts 5. 36.

But let thus much suffice to have been spoken concerning the Persons to whom Obedience must be performed.

SERMON XXV.

Of Obedience to our Spiritual GUIDES and GOVERNOURS.

H E B. XIII. 17.

Obey them that have the Rule over you.

I Proceed to the Duty it self, the Obedience prescribed, which may (according to the extent in signification of the Word *πείθεσθαι*) be conceived to relate either to the Government, or to the Doctrine, or to the Conversation of the Persons specified; implying that we should obey their Laws, that we should embrace their Doctrine, that we should conform to their Practice, according to proper Limitations of such Performance, respectively:

We begin with the first, as seeming chiefly intended by the Words:

• Obedience to Ecclesiastical Government; what this doth import we may understand by considering the Terms whereby it is expressed, and those whereby its Correlate (spiritual Government) is signified; by Examples and Practice relating to it, by the Nature and Reason of the Matter it self.

Beside the Word *πείθεσθαι* (which is commonly used to signify all sorts of Obedience, chiefly that which is due to Governours) here is added a Word serving to explain that, the word *ὑπέκειν*, which signifieth to yield, give way, or comply; relating (as it seemeth by its being put indefinitely) to all their Proceedings in matters concerning their Charge. In other Places, parallel to our Text, it is expressed by *ὑποτάσσεται*, the same Term, by which constantly the Subjection due to secular Powers (in all the Precepts enjoying it) is expressed: *Ὁμῶς νεώτεροι ὑποτάσσιντε τοῖς πρεσβυτέραις*, In like manner (or correspondently saith St. Peter) ye younger submit your selves to the elder (that is, as the Context shews, ye Inferiours in the Church obey your Superiours; ὁ νεώτερος both there and elsewhere doth signify the State of Inferiority, as ὁ πρεσβύτερος importeth Dignity and Authority.) And *ὑποτάσσεσθε τοῖς τοιούτοις* submit your selves unto such, and to every one that helpeth with us, and laboureth, saith St. Paul; and *ἀλλήλοις ὑποτασσόμενοι*, Submitting your selves to one another in the fear of God, that is, yielding conscientiously that Submission, which established Order requireth from one to another: whence we may collect, that the Duty consisteth in yielding submission and compliance to all Laws,

Laws, Rules and Orders enacted by Spiritual Governours for the due Celebration of God's Worship, the promoting Edification, the conserving Decency, the maintenance of Peace; as also to the Judgments and Censures in order to the same Purposes administered by them.

This Obedience to be due to them may likewise be inferred from the various Names and Titles attributed to them; such as those of *Prelates, Superintendents, Pastours, Supravisors, Governours* and *Leaders*; which Terms, (more largely touched before) do imply Command and Authority of all sorts, *Legislative, Judicial, and Executive*.

Such Obedience also Primitive Practice doth assert to them: for what Authority the holy *Apostles* did assume and exercise, the same we may reasonably suppose derived to them; the same in Kind, although not in peculiarity of Manner (by immediate Commission from *Christ*, with supply of extraordinary Gifts and Graces) and in unlimitedness of extent: for they do succeed to the *Apostles* in charge and care over the Church, each in his Precinct (the Apostolical Office being distributed among them all.) The same Titles which the *Apostles* assumed to themselves, they ascribe to their *Sympresbyters*, requiring the same Duties from them,

Cujus in solidum singuli participes sumus. Vid. Cypr. de Unit. Eccl.

2 Cor. 10. 8. 13. 10.
To ordain Elders.
To confirm Profelytes.
To exercise Jurisdiction.

}

and prescribing Obedience to them in the same Terms; They claimed no more Power than was needful to further Edification, and this is requisite that present Governours also should have; their Practice in Government may also well be presu-

med exemplary to all future Governours: As then we see them *Ἀγαπᾶσαι*, to order things, and frame Ecclesiastical Constitutions, *διορθῶν*, to rectify things, or reform defects, to impose Observances necessary or expedient to the time; to judge Causes and Persons, being ready to *avenger* or punish every disobedience; to use severity upon Occasions; with the spiritual Rod to chastise scandalous Offenders, disorderly *walkers*, Persons contumacious and unconformable to their Injunctions; to reject Hereticks, and banish notorious Sinners from Communion, warning the Faithful to forbear Conversation with them: As they did challenge to themselves an authority from *Christ* to exercise these and the like Acts of spiritual Dominion and Jurisdiction, exacting punctual Obedience to them; as we also see the like Acts exercised by Bishops, whom they did constitute to feed and rule the Church; so we may reasonably conceive all Governours of the Church (the Heirs of their Office) invested with like Authority in order to the same Purposes, and that correspondent Obedience is due to them; so that what blame, what punishment was due to those, who disobeyed the *Apostles*, doth in proportion belong to the Transgressors of their Duty toward the present Governours of the Church; especially considering that our Lord promised his perpetual Presence and Assistance to the *Apostles*.

We may farther observe, That accordingly in continual Succession from the first Ages, the good primitive *Bishops* (the great Patrons and Propagators of our Religion) did generally assume such Power, and the People readily did yield Obedience; wherein that one did wrongfully usurp, the other did weakly comply, were neither probable, nor just to suppose; whence general Tradition doth also confirm our Obligation to this Duty.

That this kind of Obedience is required doth also farther appear from considering the Reason of Things, the Condition of the Church, the Design of the Christian Religion.

1. Every Christian Church is a Society; no Society can abide in any comely Order, any steady Quiet, any desirable Prosperity without Government; no Government can stand without correspondent Obligation to submit thereto.

2. Again, The State of Religion under the Gospel is the Kingdom of Heaven; *Christ* our Lord is King of the Church; it he visibly governeth and ordereth by the spiritual Governours as his Substitutes and Lieutenants (whence they peculiarly are stiled his *Ministers*, his *Officers*, his *Stewards*, his *Legates*, his *Workers*.) When he ascending up to God's Right hand was invested with entire Possession of that Royal State, he settled them to administer Affairs concerning that Government in his Place and Name; *Ascending up on high he gave gifts unto men*—He gave some *Apostles*, some *Prophets*, some *Evangelists*, some *Pastours* and *Teachers*; He gave them, that is, he appointed them in their Office, subordinate to himself, for the perfecting of the Saints, for the work of the Ministry, for the edifying of the body of *Christ*;

Eph. 4. 3, 11, 12.

Christ ; As to him therefore ruling by them, by them enacting Laws, dispensing Justice, maintaining Order and Peace, Obedience is due.

3. Again, For the Honour of God, the Commendation of Religion, and Benefit of the People, it is needful that in all religious Performances, Things should, according to St. Paul's Rule, be performed *decently, and according to order*, without inhandfom Confusion, and troublesome Distraction ; this cannot be accomplished without a Determination of Persons, of Modes, of Circumstances appertaining to those Performances ; for how can any thing be performed decently, if every Person hath not his Rank and Station, his Office and Work allotted to him ; if to every thing to be done, its time, its place, its manner of Performance be not assigned, so that each one may know what, when, where, and how he must do ? Such Determination must be committed to the Discretion and Care of some Persons, empower'd to frame standing Laws or Rules concerning it, and to see them duly executed (for all Persons without delay, strife, confusion, and disturbance cannot meddle in it) with these Persons all the rest of the Body must be obliged to comply ; otherwise all such Determinations will be vain and ineffectual. Such Order, Reason doth recommend in every Proceeding ; such Order especially becometh the Grandeur and Importance of sacred Things ; such Order God hath declared himself to approve, and love, especially in his own House, among his People, in Matters relating to his Service ; for *He is not* (as St. Paul saith, arguing to this Purpose) *the God of confusion, but of peace, in all Churches of the Saints.*

4. Again, It is requisite that all Christian Brethren should conspire in serving God with mutual Charity, hearty Concord, harmonious Consent ; that (as the Apostles so often prescribed) they *should endeavour to keep unity of spirit in the bond of peace* : That they should be like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind, standing fast in one spirit, with one mind ; That they should walk by the same rule, and mind the same thing ; That with one mind, and one mouth they should glorify God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ ; That they should all speak the same thing ; and that there be no Divisions among them, but that they be perfectly joyned together in the same mind, and in the same judgment ; (like those in the Acts, of whom it is said, *The multitude of believers had one heart, and one soul*) That there should be no schisms (Divisions, or Factions) in the body ; that all Dissentions, all murmurings, all Emulations should be discarded from the Church : The which Precepts, secluding an Obligation to Obedience, would be impossible, and vain ; for (without continual Miracle, and transforming Human Nature, Things not to be expected from God, who apparently designeth to manage Religion by ordinary ways of human Prudence, his gracious Assistance concurring) no durable Concord in any Society can ever effectually be maintained otherwise than by one publick Reason, Will and Sentence, which may represent, connect, and comprize all ; in defect of that every one will be of a several Opinion about what is best, each will be earnest for the Prevalence of his Model and Way ; there will be so many Law-givers as Persons, so many Differences as Matters incident ; nothing will pass smoothly and quietly, without bickering and jangling : and consequently without Animosities and Feuds ; whence no Unanimity, no Concord, scarce any Charity or Good-will can subsist.

5. Farther, in Consequence of these Things, common Edification requireth such Obedience : It is the Duty of Governours to order all things to this End, that is, to the Maintenance, Encouragement, and Improvement of Piety ; for this Purpose their Authority was given them (as St. Paul saith) and therefore it must be deemed thereto conducive ; it is indeed very necessary to Edification, which without Discipline guiding the simple and ignorant, reclaiming the erroneous and presumptuous, cherishing the regular, and correcting the refractory, can no wise be promoted.

Excluding it, there can be no means of checking or redressing Scandals, which to the reproach of Religion, to the disgrace of the Church, to the corrupting the Minds, and infecting the Manners of Men, will spring up, and spread. Neither can there be any way to prevent the rise and growth of pernicious Errors or Heresies, the which assuredly in a State of unrestrained Liberty the wanton and wicked Minds of Men will breed, their licentious Practice will foster, and propagate ; to the *encrease of all impiety ; their mouths must be stopped*, otherwise they will subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not for filthy lucre sake ; the

word of naughty Seducers will spread like a gangrene, if there be no corrosive or corrective Remedy to stay its Progreſs.

Jam. 3. 16. • Where Things are not managed in a ſtable, quiet, orderly way, no good Practice can flouriſh or thrive; Diſſention will choak all good Affections, Confuſion will obſtruct all good Proceedings; from Anarchy Emulation and Strife will certainly grow, and from them all Sorts of Wickedneſs; for *where* (ſaith St. James) there is *emulation and ſtrife, there is confuſion, and every evil thing.*

1 Pet. 2. 5. All thoſe Benefits, which ariſe from holy Communion in Offices of Piety and Charity (from common Prayers and Praises to God, from participation in all ſacred Ordinances, from mutual Advice, Admonition, Encouragement, Conſolation, good Example) will together vaniſh with Diſcipline; theſe depend upon the friendly union and correſpondence of the Members; and no ſuch Union can abide without the Ligament of Diſcipline, no ſuch Correſpondence can be upheld without unanimous Compliance to publick Order. The Cement of Diſcipline wanting, the Church will not be like a *ſpiritual houſe*, compacted of *lively ſtones* into one goodly Pile: but like a Company of ſcattered Peebles, or a heap of Rubbiſh.

So conſidering the reaſon of Things, this Obedience will appear needful; to enforce the Practice thereof we may adjoin ſeveral weighty Conſiderations.

Conſider Obedience what it is, whence it ſprings, what it produceth, each of thoſe Reſpects will engage us to it.

It is in it ſelf a Thing very good and acceptable to God, very juſt and equal, very wiſe, very comely and pleaſant.

Tempus eſt, — ut de ſubmiſſione provocent in ſe Dei clementiam, & de honore debito in Dei ſacerdotem eliciant in ſe divinam miſericordiam. Cyr. Ep. 30.

It cannot but be grateful unto God, who is the God of Love, of Order, of Peace, and therefore cannot but like the Means furthering them; he cannot but be pleaſed to ſee Men do their Duty, eſpecially that which regardeth his own Miniſters; in the Reſpect performed to whom he is himſelf indeed avowed, and honoured, and obeyed.

It is a juſt and equal Thing, that every Member of Society ſhould ſubmit to the Laws and Orders of it; for every Man is ſuppoſed upon thoſe Terms to enter into, and to abide in it; every Man is deemed to owe ſuch Obedience in answer to his enjoyment of Privileges, and partaking of Advantages thereby; ſo therefore whoever pretendeth a Title to thoſe excellent Immunities, Benefits and Comforts, which Communion with the Church affordeth, it is moſt equal, that he ſhould contribute to its Support and Welfare, its Honour, its Peace; that conſequently he ſhould yield Obedience to the Orders appointed for thoſe Ends. Peculiarly equal it is in regard to our Spiritual Governours, who are obliged to be very ſolicitous and laborious in furthering our beſt good; who ſtand deeply engaged, and are reſponſible for the welfare of our Souls: They muſt be contented to ſpend, and be ſpent, to undergo any Pains, any Hardſhips, any Dangers and Croſſes, occurring in purſuance of thoſe Deſigns: And is it not then plainly equal (is it not indeed more than equal, doth not all Ingenuity and Gratitude require?) that we ſhould encourage, and comfort them in bearing thoſe Burthens, and in diſcharging thoſe Incumbrances by a fair and chearful Compliance? 'Tis the Apoſtle's enforcement of the Duty in our Text: *Obey them* (ſaith he) *and ſubmit your ſelves; for they watch for your ſouls, as thoſe, who are to render an account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief* (or groaning.)

Is it not indeed extreme Iniquity and Ingratitude, when they with anxious Care, and earneſt Toil are endeavouring our Happineſs, that we ſhould vex and trouble them by our perverſe and croſs Behaviour?

Nay, is it not palpable Folly to do thus, ſeeing thereby we do indiſpoſe and hinder them from effectually diſcharging their Duty to our Advantage? *Ἀλλοσιπλὸς ὁ ὑμῶν τέτος, for this* (addeth the Apoſtle, farther preſſing the Duty) *is unprofitable to you*, or it tendeth to your Diſadvantage and Damage; not only as involving Guilt, but as inferring Loſs; the loſs of all thoſe ſpiritual Benefits, which Miniſters being encouraged, and thence performing their Office with Alacrity and ſprightly Diligence would procure to you: It is therefore our Wiſdom to be obedient, becauſe Obedience is ſo advantageous and profitable to us.

The ſame is alſo a comely and amiable Thing, yielding much Grace, procuring great Honour to the Church, highly adorning and crediting Religion: It is a goodly ſight to behold Things proceeding orderly; to ſee every Perſon quietly reſting

resting in his Post, or moving evenly in his Rank; to observe Superiors calmly leading, Inferiors gladly following, and Equals lovingly accompanying each other: This is the Psalmist's *Ecce quam bonum! Behold, how (admirably) good, and how pleasant it is for Brethren to dwell together in unity!* Such a State of Things argueth the good Temper and Wisdom of Persons so demeaning themselves, the Excellency of the Principles, which do guide and act them, the Goodness of the Constitution which they observe; so it crediteth the Church, and graceth Religion; a thing which (as St. Paul teacheth) *in all things* we should endeavour. Psal. 139. 1. Tit. 2. 10. 5.

It is also a very pleasant and comfortable Thing to live in Obedience; by it we enjoy Tranquility of Mind, and Satisfaction of Conscience, we taste all the Sweetness of Amity and Peace, we are freed from the Stings of inward Remorse, we escape the Grievances of Discord and Strife.

The Causes also and Principles, from which Obedience springeth, do much commend it: It ariseth from the Dispositions of Soul, which are most Christian, and most Human; from Charity, Humility, Meekness, Sobriety of Mind, and Calmness of Passion; the which always dispose Men to submissive, complaisant, peaceable Demeanour toward all Men, especially toward those, whose Relation to them claimeth such Demeanour; these a genuine, free, cordial and constant Obedience do signifie to live in the Soul; together with a general Honesty of Intention, and Exemption from base Designs.

In fine, innumerable and inestimable are the Benefits and good Fruits accruing from this Practice: Beside the Support it manifestly yieldeth to the Church, the Gracefulness of Order, the Conveniences and Pleasures of Peace, it hath also a notable Influence upon the common Manners of Men, which hardly can ever prove very bad, where the Governours of the Church do retain their due Respect and Authority; nothing more powerfully doth instigate to Vertue, than the Countenance of Authority, nothing more effectually can restrain from Exorbitancy of Vice, than the Bridle of Discipline: This obvious Experience demonstrateth, and we shall plainly see, if we reflect upon those Times when Piety and Vertue have most flourished: Whence was it, that in those good old Times Christians did so abound in good Works, that they burnt with holy Zeal, that they gladly would do, would suffer any thing for their Religion? Whence but from a mighty Respect to their Superiours; from a strict Regard to their Direction and Discipline? Did the Bishops then prescribe long Fasts, or impose rigid Penances? Willingly did the People undergo them; Did the Pastour conduct into Danger, did he lead them into the very Jaws of Death, and Martyrdom? The Flock with a resolute Alacrity did follow; Did a Prelate interdict any Practice scandalous, or prejudicial to the Church; under pain of incurring Censure? Every Man trembled at the Consequences of transgressing:

No terror of worldly Power, no severity of Justice, no dread of corporal Punishment had such Efficacy to deter Men from ill-doing, as the Reproof and Censure of a Bishop; his Frown could avail more than the Menaces of an Emperor, than the Rage of a Persecutor, than the Rods and Axes of an Executioner: No Rod indeed did smart like the spiritual Rod, no Sword did cut so deep as that of the Spirit; no Loss was then so valuable, as being deprived of spiritual Advantages; no Banishment was so grievous as being separated from Holy Communion; no Sentence of Death was so terrible, as that which cut Men off from the Church: No Thunder could astonish or affright Men like the Crack of a spiritual *Anathema*: This was that which kept Vertue in request, and Vice in detestation, hence it was that Men were so good, that Religion did so thrive, that so frequent, and so illustrious Examples of Piety did appear: Hence indeed we may well reckon that Christianity did (under so many Disadvantages and Oppositions) subsist, and grow up; Obedience to Governours was its Guard; that kept the Church firmly united in a Body sufficiently strong to maintain it self against all Assaults of Faction within, of Opposition from abroad; that preserved that Concord, which disposed and enabled Christians to defend their Religion against all Fraud and Violence: that cherished the true Vertue, and the beautiful Order, which begot Veneration to Religion; to it therefore we owe the Life and Growth of Christianity, so that through many sharp Persecutions it hath held up its Head; through so many perillous Diseases it hath kept its Life until this Day. There were not then of

Neque hoc ita dixerim, ut negligatur Ecclesiastica disciplina, & permittatur quisquam facere quod velit sine ulla correptione, & quadam medicinali vindicta, & terribili lenitate, & charitatis severitate. Aug. adv. Petil. 3. 4.

old any such Cavils and Clamours against every thing prescribed by Governours; there were no such unconscionable Scruples, no such hard-hearted Pretences to tender Conscience devised to baffle the Authority of Superiours; had there been such, had Men then commonly been so froward and factious as now, the Church had been soon shivered into Pieces, our Religion had been swallowed up in Confusion and Licentiousness.

If again we on the other hand fix our Consideration upon Disobedience, (the Nature, the Sources, the Consequences thereof) it will, I suppose, much conduce to the same effect, of persuading us to the Practice of this Duty.

It is in its self a heinous Sin, being the Transgression of a Command in nature and consequence very important, upon which God layeth great stress, which is frequently inculcated in Scripture, which is fenced by divers other Precepts, which is pressed by strong Arguments, and backed by severe threatnings of Punishment upon the Transgressours.

It is in its nature a kind of Apostasie from Christianity, and Rebellion against our Lord; for as he that refuseth to obey the King's Magistrates in Administration of their Office is interpreted to disclaim his Authority, and to design Rebellion against him: so they who obstinately disobey the Ministers of our Lord's spiritual Kingdom, do thereby appear to disavow him, to shake off his Yoke, to impeach his Reign over them; so doth he himself interpret and take it: *He* (saith Luke 10. 16. *our Lord*) *that heareth you, heareth me, and he that* (ὁ ἀδικῶν, *that baffleth*) *despi-* Matt. 10. 40. *seth you, despiseth me; and, If any man neglect to hear the Church* (or shall disobey it, ἐὰν ὁ λαὸς ἀκούῃ) *let him be to thee as a heathen, and a publican; that is, such a refractory Person doth by his Contumacy put himself into the State of one removed from the Commonwealth of Israel, he forfeiteth the special Protection of God, he becometh as an Alien, or an Outlaw from the Kingdom of our Lord.*

Deut. 17. 12. *Under the Mosaical Dispensation those who would do presumptuously, and would not hearken unto the Priest, that stood to minister before the Lord, did incur capital Punishment; those who factiously murmured against Aaron, are said to make an Infurrection against God, and answerably were punished in a miraculous Way.* Num. 16. 11. *(The Lord made a new thing, the earth opened, and swallowed them up; they went down alive into the pit.)* It was in the Prophetical Times an Expression signifying height of Impiety; *My People is as those who strive with the Priest*: Seeing then God hath no

Quo exemplo ostenditur, & probatur obnoxios omnes & culpa & poena futuros, qui se schismatici contra praeceptos & sacerdotes irreligiosâ temeritate miscuerint. Cypr. Ep. 76.

less regard to his peculiar Servants now than he had then; seeing they no less represent him, and act by his Authority now, than any did then; seeing their Service is as precious to him, and as much tendeth to his Honour now, as the Levitical Service then did; seeing he no less loveth Order and

Peace in the Church, than he did in the Synagogue; we may well suppose it a no less heinous Sin, and odious to God, to despise the Ministers of Christ's Gospel, than it was before to despise the Ministers of Moses his Law.

It is a Sin indeed, pregnant with divers Sins, and involving the Breach of many great Commands, which are frequently proposed and pressed in the New Testament, with design in great Part to guard and secure it; *That of doing all things in charity, of doing all things without murmurings, and dissensions, of pursuing peace so far as lieth in us, of maintaining Unity, Concord, Unanimity in Devotion, of avoiding Schisms, and Dissensions, and the like; which are all notoriously violated by this Disobedience; it includeth the most high Breach of Charity, the most formal infringing Peace, the most scandalous kind of Discord that can be, to cross our Superiours.*

1 Cor. 16. 14.
Phil. 2. 14.
Rom. 12. 18.
2 Tim. 2. 22.
Heb. 12. 14.
Mark 9. 10.

An esse sibi cum Christo videtur, qui adversus sacerdotes Christi facit? &c. Cypr. de Unit. Eccl. p. 258.

It is also a Practice issuing from the worst Dispositions of Soul, such as are most opposite to the Spirit of our Religion, and indeed very repugnant to common Reason and Humanity; from a proud Haughtiness, or vain Wantonness of Mind, from the irregularity of unmortified and unbridled Passion, from exorbitant Selfishness, (Selfishness of every bad kind, Self-conceit, Self-will, Self-interest) from turbulent Animosity, froward Crossness of Humour, rancorous Spite, perverse Obstinacy; from Envy, Ambition, Avarice, and the like ill Sources, the worst Fruits of the Flesh and corrupt Nature; to such Dispositions the rejecting God's Prophets of old, and the non-compliance with the Apostles are ascribed in Scripture; and from the same the like neglect of God's Messengers now do proceed; as

who-

whoever will observe may easily discern; do but mind the Discourses of factious People, you shall perceive them all to breathe generally nothing but Ill-nature.

The Fruits also, which it produceth, are extremely bad; manifold great Inconveniencies and Mischiefs, hugely prejudicing the Interest of Religion, and the Welfare of the Church.

It is immediately and formally a Violation of Order and Peace; whence all the woful Consequences of Disorder and Faction do adhere thereto.

It breedeth great Disgrace to the Church, and Scandal to Religion; for what can appear more ugly than to see among the Professors of Religion, Children opposing their Fathers, Scholars contesting with their Masters, Inferiours flighting and crossing their Superiours? What can more expose the Church and Religion to the Contempt, to the Derision of *Atheists* and *Infidels*, of profane and lewd Persons, of wild *Hereticks* and *Schismaticks*, of all Enemies unto Truth and Piety, than such foul Irregularity?

Inde Schismata, & Hæreses obortæ sunt, & oriuntur, dum Episcopus, qui unus est, & Ecclesia præest superbâ quorundam præsumptione contemnitur.

Cypr. Ep. 69.

Hæc sunt initia Hereticorum, & ortus atque conatus Schismaticorum malè cogitantium ut sibi placeant, ut præpositum superbo tumore contemnunt. Sic de Ecclesia receditur, sic altare profanum foris collocatur, sic contra pacem Christi, atque unitatem Dei rebellatur.

Cypr. Ep. 65.

It corrupteth the Minds and Manners of Men; for when that Discipline is relaxed, which was ordained to guard Truth, and promote Holiness; when Men are grown so licentious and stubborn, as to contemn their Superiours, to disregard their wholsom Laws and sober Advice, there can be no curb to restrain them; but down precipitantly they run into all kind of vicious Irregularities and Excesses; when those Mounds are taken away, whither will Men ramble; when those Banks are broken down, what can we expect but Deluges of impious Doctrine, and wicked Practice to overflow the ignorant and inconsiderate People?

Ecclesiæ gloriæ præpositi gloriæ est. Cypr. Ep. 7. Ep. 55.

Doth not indeed this Practice evidently tend to the Dissolution of the Church, and Destruction of Christianity? For when the *Shepherds* are (as to conduct and efficacy) *taken away*, will *not the sheep be scattered*, or *wander astray*, like *sheep without a shepherd*, being bewildred in various Errors, and exposed as a Prey to any wild Beasts; to the *grievous wolves*, to the *ravenous lions*, to the wily Foxes? Here a fanatical Enthusiast will snap them, there a profane Libertine will worry them, there again a desperate Atheist will tear and devour them.

Τὸ τοῦ πάντων τῶν κακῶν αἴτιον, ὅτι τὰ τῶν ἀρχόντων ἡρωϊσθῆ, & δέμια διδῶς, ἐδίδε φέβει, &c. Chryl. in 2. Tim. Or. 2.

Consult we but obvious Experience, and we shall see, what spoils and mines of Faith, of good Conscience, of common Honesty and Sobriety this Practice hath in a few Years caused: How have *Atheism* and *Infidelity*, how have Profaneness and Dissoluteness of Manners, how have all kinds of Dishonesty and Baseness grown up since Men began to disregard the Authority of their Spiritual Guides? What dismal Tragedies have we in our Age beheld acted upon this Stage of our own Country; What bloody Wars and Murthers (Murthers of *Princes*, of *Nobles*, of *Bishops* and *Priests*) what miserable Oppressions, Extortions and Rapes; what execrable Seditions and Rebellions; what barbarous Animosities and Feuds; what abominable Treasons, Sacrileges, Perjuries, Blasphemies; what horrible violations of all Justice and Honesty? And what I pray was the Source of these things? Where did they begin? Where, but at murmuring against, at rejecting, at persecuting the Spiritual Governours, at casting down and trampling on their Authority; at flighting and spurning at their Advice; surely would Men have observed the Laws, or have hearkned to the Counsels of those grave and sober Persons, whom God had appointed to direct them, they never would have run into the Commission of such Enormities.

It is not to be omitted, that in the present State of Things, the Guilt of Disobedience to spiritual Governours is encreased and aggravated by the supervenient Guilt of another Disobedience to the Laws of our Prince and Country; Before the Secular Powers (unto whom God hath committed the Dispensation of Justice, with the Maintenance of Peace and Order in reference to worldly Affairs) did submit to our Lord, and became *nursing Parents of the Church*, the Power of managing Ecclesiastical Matters did wholly reside in spiritual Guides; unto whom Christians, as the *peculiar Subjects* of God, were obliged willingly to yield Obedience; and refusing it, were guilty before God of spiritual Disorder, Faction, or Schism; but now after that political Authority (out of pious Zeal for God's Service, out of a wise Care to prevent the Influences of Disorder in spiritual Matters upon the Temporal Peace, out of grateful return for the Advantages the

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Common-wealth enjoyeth from Religion, and the Church) hath pleased to back and fortifie the Laws of Spiritual Governours by civil Sanctions, the Knot of our Obligation is tied faster, its Force is redoubled, we by Disobedience incur a double Guilt, and offend God two ways, both as Supreme Governour of the World, and as King of the Church; to our Schism against the Church we add Rebellion against our Prince, and so become no less bad Citizens than bad Christians; Some may perhaps imagine their Disobedience hence more excusable, taking themselves now only thereby to transgress a political Sanction; but (beside that even that were a great Offence, the Command of our temporal Governours being sufficient, out of Conscience to God's express Will, to oblige us in all things not evidently repugnant to God's Law) it is a great Mistake to think the Civil Law doth anywise derogate from the Ecclesiastical; that doth not swallow this up, but succoureth and corroborateth it; their Concurrence yieldeth an accession of weight and strength to each; they do not by conspiring to prescribe the same thing either of them cease to be Governours as to right; but in efficacy the Authority of both should thence be augmented; seeing the Obligation to Obedience is multiplied upon their Subjects; and to disobey them is now two Crimes, which otherwise should be but one.

SERMON XXVI.

Of Obedience to our Spiritual GUIDES and GOVERNOURS.

H E B. XIII. 17.

Obey them that have the rule over you.

SUCH is the Nature of this Duty, and such are the Reasons enforcing the Practice thereof; I shall only farther remove two Impediments of that Practice; and so leave this Point.

Μάλιστα δὲ πάντων Χριστιανῶς ἐκ ἐ-
φείη πρὸς βίαν ἐπαγορεύειν τὰ τῶν ἀμαρ-
τανόντων πλάσματα, Sc. Chrys. de Sa-
cerd. 2.

Ἐνταῦθα ἡ βία ὁμιλοῦται, ἀλλὰ πείθου-
τα δὲ ποιῶν ἀμείνω τῶν τοιούτων. Ibid.
Matt. 20. 27. Luke 22. 26.

1 Pet. 5. 3.

1. One hindrance of Obedience is this, that spiritual Power is not Despotical, or Compulsory, but Parental or Pastoral; that it hath no external Force to abett it, or to avenge Disobedience to its Laws; they must not *κατεξουσιάζειν*, or *κατακυ-
λεύειν* (be imperious, or domineer) they are not allowed to exercise Violence, or to inflict bodily Correction; but must rule in meek and gentle ways, directly influential upon the

Mind and Conscience (ways of rational Persuasion, Exhortation, Admonition, 2 Tim. 2. 24. Reproof) *in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; — convincing, 4. 2. rebuking, exhorting with all long-suffering, and Doctrine*: Their Word is their only 1 Tim. 3. 3. Weapon, their Force of Argument all the Constraint they apply; hence Men commonly do not stand in awe of them, nor are so sensible of their Obligation to obey them; they cannot understand why they should be frightened by Words, or controlled by an unarmed Authority.

But this, in truth (Things being duly considered) is so far from diminishing our Obligation, or arguing the Authority of our Governours to be weak and precarious, that it rendreth our Obligation much greater, and their Authority more dreadful; for the sweeter and gentler their way of governing is, the more disingenuous and unworthy a Thing it is to disobey it; not to be persuaded by Reason, not to be allured by Kindness, not to admit friendly Advice, not to comply

with

with the calmest Methods of furthering our own Good, is a brutish thing ; he that only can be scared and scourged to Duty, scarce deserveth the Name of a Man : It therefore doth the more oblige us, that in this way we are moved to Action by Love rather than Fear : Yet if we would fear wisely and justly (not like Children, being frightened with formidable Shapes, and Appearances, but like Men apprehending the real Consequences of Things) we should the more fear these Spiritual Powers, because they are insensible : For that God hath commanded us to obey them, without assigning visible Forces to constrain or chastise, is a manifest Argument that he hath reserved the Vindication of their Authority to his own Hand, which therefore will be infallibly certain, and terribly severe ; so the nature of the Case requireth, and so God hath declared it shall be ; The Sentence that is upon Earth, pronounced by his Ministers upon contumacious Offenders, he hath declared himself ready to ratifie in Heaven, and therefore most assuredly will execute it : As under the old Law God appointed to the Transgression of some Laws, upon which he laid special Stress, the Punishment of being *cut off from his people* ; the Execution of which Punishment he reserved to himself, to be accomplished in his own way, and time ; so doth he now in like manner take upon him to maintain the Cause of his Ministers ; and to execute the Judgments decreed by them ; and if so, we may consider that *it is a dreadful thing* Heb. 10. 31. *to fall into the hands of the living God* : Ecclesiastical Authority therefore is not a Shadow void of Substance or Force, but hath the greatest Power in the World to support and assert it ; it hath Arms to maintain it most effectual and forcible (those of which St. Paul saith, *The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God*—) 2 Cor. 10. 4. it inflicteth Chastisements far more dreadful than any secular Power can inflict ; for these only touch the Body, those pierce the Soul ; these concern only our Temporal State, those reach Eternity it self ; these at most yield a transitory Smart, or kill the Body, those produce endless Torment ; and (utterly as to all Comfort in being) destroy the Soul.

The Punishment for extream Contumacy is called *delivery to Satan* ; and is not this far worse than to be put into the Hands of any Gaoler or Hangman ? What are any Cords of Hemp, or Fetters of Iron in comparison to those Bands, of which 'tis said, *Whatever ye bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven* ; which engage the Soul in a Guilt, never to be loosed, except by sore Contrition, and serious Repentance ? What are any Scourges to St. Paul's Rod, lashing the Heart and Conscience with stinging Remorse ; What any Axes or Faulchions to that *sword of the spirit*, which cutteth off a Member from the Body of Christ ? What are any Faggots and Torches to that unquenchable *fire and brimstone* of the infernal Lake ? What, in fine, doth any Condemnation here signifie to that horrible Curse, which devoteth an incorrigible Soul to the bottomless Pit ?

It is therefore indeed a great Advantage to this Power that it is Spiritual.

2. Another grand Obstruction to the Practice of this Duty, is, Pretence to scruple about the Lawfulness, or Dissatisfaction in the Expedience of that which our Governours prescribe, that we are able to advance Objections against their Decrees, that we can espy Inconveniences ensuing upon their Orders ; that we imagine the Constitution may be reformed, so as to become more pure, more convenient and comely, more serviceable to Edification ; that we cannot fanſie that to be best which they enjoy : For removing this Obstruction let me only propound some Questions.

Were not any Government appointed in vain, if such Pretences might exempt or excuse from Conformity to its Orders ? Can such ever be wanting ? Is there any Thing devisable, which may not be impugned by some plausible Reason, which may not disgust a squeamish Humour ? Is there any Matter so clearly innocent, the Lawfulness whereof a weak Mind will not question, any thing so firm and solid, in which a shall Acuteness of Wit cannot pick a Hole, any thing so indisputably certain, that whoever affecteth to cavil may not easily devise some Objections against it ?

Is there any thing here that hath no Inconveniences attending it ? Are not in all human Things, Conveniences and Inconveniences so mixt and complicated, that it is impossible to disentangle and sever them ? Can there be any Constitution under Heaven so absolutely pure and perfect, that no Blemish or Defect shall appear therein ? Can any Providence of Man foresee, any Care prevent, any Industry remedy all Inconveniences possible ? Is a Reformation satisfactory to all

Fancies

Mat. 18. 18.

Heb. 10. 31.

2 Cor. 10. 4.

Spirituali gladio superbi & contumaces necantur, dum de Ecclesia ejiciuntur.
Cypr. Ep. 61.

Cypr. Ep. 50. & 52. (p. 97.)

Φιλοῖνοις οἷον
νῦν εἰ λείπει
εἰδὲ φιλονεικῶ
μέχρι· Socr.
hist. 7. 31.

Fancies any-wise practicable; and are they not fitter to live in a *Platonick Idea* of a Common-wealth, than in any real Society who prefs for such an one? To be facile and complaisant in other Cases, bearing with Things which do not please us, is esteemed commendable, a courteous and human Practice, why should it not be much more reasonable to condescend to our Superiours, and comport with their Practice? Is it not very discourteous to deny them the Respect which we allow to others, or to refuse that Advantage to publick Transactions, which we think fit to grant unto private Conversation?

Οὐ γὰρ μόνον ἔδειξεν (πολιτείαν) δὲ θεωρεῖν, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὴν ἐναρτέω. Arist. Pol. 4. 1.

Si ubi jubeantur quære singulis liceat; pereunte obsequio etiam imperium interdicat. Tac. 1. p. 450. Otho.

To what Purpose did God institute a Government, if the Resolutions thereof must be suspended, till every Man is satisfied with them; or if its State must be altered so often as any Man can pick in it Matter of Offence or Dislike; or if the Proceedings thereof must be shaped according to the numberless Varieties of different and repugnant Fancies?

Are, I pray, the Objections against Obedience so clear, and cogent, as are the Commands which enjoin, and the Reasons which enforce it? Are the Inconveniences adhering to it apparently so grievous, as are the Mischiefs which spring from Disobedience? Do they in a just Balance counterpoize the Disparagement of Authority, the Violation of Order, the Disturbance of Peace, the Obstruction of Edification, which Disobedience produceth?

Dixisti sancti scrupulum tibi esse tollendum de animo, in quem incidisti; Incidisti, sed tuâ credulitate irreligiosa, &c. Cypr. Ep. 69. (ad Florent.) vid. optime & appositè de hac re differentem.

Do the *Scruples* (or *Reasons*, if we call them so) which we propound, amount to such a Strength and Evidence, as to out-weigh the Judgment of those whom God hath authorized by his Commission, whom he doth enable by his Grace to instruct and guide us? May not those, whose Office it is to

judge of such Things; whose Business it is to study for Skill in order to that purpose, who have most Experience in those Affairs, specially belonging to them, be reasonably deemed most able to judge both for themselves and us, what is lawful, and what expedient? Have they not Eyes to see what we do, and Hearts to judge concerning the Force of our Pretences, as well as we?

Qui fidei & veritati præsumus. Cypr. Ep. 72.

Is it not a Design of their Office to resolve our Doubts, and void our Scruples in such Cases, that we may act securely and quietly, being directed by better Judgments than our own? Are they not strictly obliged in Conscience, are they not deeply engaged by Interest to govern us in the best manner? Is it therefore Wisdom, is it Modesty, is it Justice for us to advance our private Conceits against their most deliberate publick Resolutions? May we not in so doing mistake; may we not be blind, or weak (not to say fond, or proud, or perverse) and shall those Defects or Defaults of ours evacuate so many Commands of God, and render his so noble, so needful an Ordinance quite insignificant?

Do we especially seem to be in earnest, or appear otherwise than illusively to palliate our naughty Affections, and sinister Respects, when we ground the Justification of our Non-conformity upon dark Subtilties, and intricate Quirks; which it is hard to conceive that we understand our selves, and whereof very perspicacious Men cannot apprehend the Force? Do we think we shall be innocent Men, because we are smart Sophisters; or that God will excuse us from our Duty, because we can perplex Men with our Discourses? Or that we are bound to do nothing, because we are able to say somewhat against all things.

Would we not do well to consider, what huge Danger they incur, and how massy a Load of Guilt they must undergo, upon whom shall be charged all those sad Disorders, and horrid Mischiefs which are naturally consequent on Disobedience; what if Confusion of Things, if Corruption of Manners; if Oppression of Truth, if Dissolution of the Church do thence ensue, what a Case then shall we be in, who confer so much thereto? Would not such Considerations be apt to beget Scruples far more disquieting an honest, and truly conscientious Mind, than any such either profound Subtilties, or superficial Plausibilities can do; which Dissenters are wont to alledge? For needeth he not to have extream Reason (Reason extreamly strong and evident) who dareth to refuse that Obedience, which God so plainly commandeth, by which his own Authority is maintained, on which the Safety, Prosperity, and Peace of the Church dependeth, in which the Support of Religion, and the Welfare of numberless Souls is deeply concerned?

Did,

Did, let me farther ask, the *Apostles*, when they settled Orders in the Church; when they imposed what they conceived needful for Edification, and Decency, when they inflicted spiritual Chastisements upon disorderly Walkers, regard such Pretences? Or had those self-conceited and self-willed People (who *obeyed* not their Words, but *resisted* and rejected them) no such Pretences? Had they nothing, think we, to say for themselves? Nothing to object against the Apostolick Orders, and Proceedings? They had surely; they failed not to find Faults in the Establishment, and to pretend a kind of tender Conscience for their Disobedience; yet this hinder'd not, but that the Apostles condemned their Mis-behaviour and inflicted severe Censures upon them.

Did not also the Primitive *Bishops* (and all Spiritual Governours down from the Beginning every where almost to these Days of Contention and Disorder) proceed in the same Course, not fearing to enact such Laws concerning indifferent Matters, and Circumstances of Religion, as seemed to them conducive to the Good of the Church? Did not all good People readily comply with their Orders, how painful soever, or disagreeable to Flesh and Blood, without Contest or Scruple? yet had not they as much Wit, and no less Conscience than our selves? They who had Wisdom enough to descry the Truth of our Religion through all the Clouds of Obloquy and Disgrace, which it lay under; who had Zeal and Constancy to bear the hardest Brunts of Persecution against it; were they such Fools as to see no Fault; so stupid as to resent nothing, or so loose as to comply with any thing? No surely; they were in truth so wise as to know their Duty, and so honest as to observe it.

If these Considerations will not satisfy, I have done; and proceed to the next Point of our Duty, to which the Precept in our Text may extend; concerning the Doctrine of our Guides: In which respect it may be conceived to imply the following Particulars, to be performed by us, as Instances, or Parts, or Degrees thereof.

1. We should readily and gladly address our selves to hear them; not out of profane and wilful Contempt, or slothful Negligence declining to attend upon their Instructions: There were of old those, of whom the *Prophets* complain, who would not so much as hearken to the Words of those whom God sent unto them; but stopped their Ears, *withdrew the shoulder, and hardened the neck, and would not hear*; there were those in the *Evangelical* times, who did ἀποδείναι τὸ λόγον, thrust away the word of God, judging themselves unworthy of eternal life; who would not admit, or hear the word of Life, and Overtures of Grace propounded by the *Apostles*; There were *Gadarenes*, who beseeched our Lord himself to depart from their Coasts; There have always been *deaf Adders*, who stop their ears to the voice of the Charmer, charm he never so wisely; No wonder then if now there be those, who will not so much as allow a Hearing to the Messengers of God, and the Guides of their Soul, some out of a factious Prejudice against their Office or their Persons, or their Way to shun them, giving themselves over to the Conduct of Seducers; some out of a profane Neglect of all Religion, out of being wholly possessed with worldly Cares, and Desires, out of Stupidity and Sloth (indisposing them to mind any thing that is serious) will not afford them any Regard: All these are extremely blameable, offensive to God, and injurious to themselves: It is a heinous Affront to God (implying a hostile Disposition toward him, an Unwillingness to have any Correspondence with him) to refuse so much as Audience to his Ambassadors; It is an interpretative Repulsing him; so of old he expressed it; *I, saith he, spake unto you, rising early, and speaking, but ye heard not; I called you, but ye answered not*; so under the Gospel, *He, saith our Lord, that heareth you, heareth me; and he that despiseth (or regardeth not) you, despiseth me*; and, *We are Ambassadors of Christ, as though God did beseech you by us; we pray you in Christ's stead, be reconciled to God*. It is a starving our Souls, depriving them of that Food, which God hath provided for them; It is keeping our selves at distance from any Means or Possibility of being well informed and quickned to the Practice of our Duty, of being reclaimed from our Errors and Sins; it is the Way to become hardened in Impiety, or sinking into a reprobate Sense: This is the first Step to Obedience; for *how can we believe, except we hear*? This is that which St. *James* urgeth; *Let every Man be quick to hear*; and, which St. *Peter* thus enjoineeth, *Like new born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that we may grow thereby*; We should especially be quick and ready to hear those,

whom God hath authorized and appointed to speak ; we should *desire to suck the milk of the word* from those, who are our spiritual Parents and Nurses.

2. We should hear them with serious, earnest Attention, and Consideration ; so that we may well understand, may be able to weigh, may retain in Memory, and may become duly affected with their Discourses ; We must not hear them drowsily and slightly, as if we were nothing concerned, or were hearing an impertinent Tale ; their Word should not pass through the Ears, and slip away without effect ; but sink into the Understanding, into the Memory, into the Heart ; like the *good seed falling into a depth of earth*, able to afford it Root and Nourishment ; therefore we must attend diligently thereto : *περισσότερον ἐν δαίμονι* *προσέχειν*, we should therefore give more abundant heed, as the Apostle saith, *to the things we hear, lest at any time we should let them slip*. This Duty the Nature and Importance of their Word requireth : *It is the word, not of men, but in truth the word of the great God*, (his Word as proceeding from him, as declaring his Mind and Will, as tending his Overtures of Grace and Mercy) which as such challengeth great Regard and Awe ; It informeth us of our chief Duties, it furthereth our main Interests, it guideth us into, it urgeth us forward in the Way to eternal Happiness ; 'tis the Word that is *able to save our souls* ; to render *us wise unto salvation* ; It therefore claimeth and deserveth from us most earnest Attention ; it is a great Indignity and Folly not to yield it.

3. We should to their Instructions bring good Dispositions of Mind, such as may render them most effectual and fruitful to us : Such as are right Intention, Candour, Docility, Meekness.

We should not be induced to hear them out of Curiosity, (as *having itching ears*) being desirous to hear *some new things*, some fine Notions, some taking Discourse ; somewhat to fantasie or talk pleasantly about ; (as the *Athenians* heard *St. Paul*, not out of Censoriousness, or Inclination to criticize, and find fault (as the *Pharisees* heard our Saviour, *Laying wait for him, and seeking to catch something out of his mouth, that they might accuse him*) not out of design to gratifie our Passions in hearing them, to reprove other Persons ; or for any such corrupt and sinister Intention, but altogether out of pure Design that we may be improved in Knowledge, and excited to the Practice of our Duty.

We should not come to hear them with Minds imbued with ill Prejudices and partial Affections, which may obstruct the Virtue and Efficacy of their Discourse ; or may hinder us from judging fairly and truly about what they say ; but with such Freedom and Ingenuity as may dispose us readily to yield unto, and acquiesce in any profitable Truth declared by them ; like the generous *Beræans*, who *received the word μετὰ πᾶσι μετὰ προθυμίας*, with all Alacrity and readiness of mind, *searching the Scriptures daily whether these things were so* ; *ὡς ἀπὸ γέννηται βρέφη*, like Infants newly born, that come to the Dugg without any other Inclination than to suck what is needful for their Sustenance.

We should be docile and tractable ; willing and apt to learn, shaking off all those Indispositions of Soul (all Dulness and Sluggishness, all Peevishness and Perverseness, all Pride and Self-conceitedness, all corrupt Affection and Indulgence, to our Conceits, our Humours, our Passions, our Lusts and inordinate Desires) which may obstruct our Understanding of the Word, our yielding Assent to it, our receiving Impression from it : There were those, concerning whom the Apostle said, that he could not proceed in his Discourse, because they were *ωὐδὲν ἔαυγαίς*, *dull of hearing* (or sluggish in hearing) who were indisposed to hear, and incapable to understand, because they would not be at the Pains to rouse up their Fancies, and fix their Minds upon a serious Consideration of Things : There were those, who had *a spirit of slumber, eyes not to see, and ears not to hear* ; who did hear with the ear, but not understand ; seeing did see, but not perceive ; for their heart had waxed gross, their ears were dull of hearing ; and their eyes were closed ; Such indocile Persons there always have been, who being stupified and perverted by corrupt Affections, became incapable of bettering from good Instruction : All such we should strive to free our selves from ; that we may perform this Duty to our Guides, and *In meekness receive the ingrafted word*.

These Practices of hearing, of attending, of coming well-disposed to Instruction, are at least Steps and Degrees necessarily pre-requisite to the Obedience prescribed ; and farther to press them all together upon us, we may consider that it

it is strictly incumbent on them (under danger of heavy Punishment and *woe*) 1 Cor. 9. 16.
willingly, earnestly, with all Diligence and Patience to *labour* in teaching and ad- 1 Cor. 5. 14.
 monishing us; they must *give attendance*, and *take heed unto their doctrine*, that it 1 Pet. 5. 2.
 may be *sound* and profitable; they must *preach the word*, and be *instant* upon it in Rom. 12. 3.
season, out of season, (that is, not only taking, but seeking and snatching all Oc- 1 Tim. 5. 17.
 casions to do it) *reproving, rebuking, exhorting with all long-suffering, and doctrine*; 1 Tim. 4. 13.
 they must *warn every man*, and *teach every man in all wisdom*, that they may *present every* 2 Tim. 4. 2.
man perfect in Christ Jesus: As they are obliged in such manner to do these things, Col. 1. 28.
 so there must be correspondent Duties lying upon us to receive their Doctrine
 readily, carefully, patiently, sincerely and fairly: As they must be faithful Dis- 1 Cor. 4. 2.
 pensers of God's heavenly Truth and holy Mysteries, so we must be obsequious
 Entertainers of them: imposing such Commands on them dorth imply reciprocal
 Obligations in their Hearers and Scholars; otherwise their Office would be vain,
 and their Endeavours fruitless; God no less would be frustrated in his Design than
 we should be deprived of the Advantages of their Institution.

But farther, it is a more immediate Ingredient of this Duty, that,

4. We should effectually be enlightened by their Doctrine, be convinced by their
 Arguments persuading Truth and Duty, be moved by their Admonitions and
 Exhortations to good Practice: We should open our Eyes to the Light, which
 they shed forth upon us; we should surrender our Judgment to the Proofs, which
 they alledge; we should yield our Hearts and Affections pliable to their mollifying,
 and warming Discourses: It is their Part to subdue our Minds to the *obedience of*
faith, and to subject our Wills to the Observance of God's Commandments. (*Casting* 2 Cor. 10. 5.
down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth it self against the knowledge of
God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.) It must
 therefore answerably be our Duty not to resist, not to hold out, not to persist ob-
 stinate in our Errours, or Prejudices; to submit our Minds to the Power of Truth;
 being willingly and gladly conquered by it; it must be our Duty to subjugate our
 Wills, to bend our Inclinations, to form our Affections to a free Compliance of
 Heart with the Duties urged upon us; we should not be like those Disciples, of
 whom our Lord complaineth thus: *O fools, and slow of heart, to believe all that the* Luke 24. 25.
prophets have spoken; nor like the *Jews*, with whom St. Stephen thus expostulates: *Ye* Acts 7. 51.
stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost.
 They should speak with Power and Efficacy; we therefore should not by our In- 1 Cor. 4. 20.
 dispositions (by Obstinacy of Conceit, or Hardness of Heart) obstruct their En- 2. 4.
 deavours; they should be *co-workers of your joy* (that is, working in us that Faith 2 Cor. 1. 24.
 and those Vertues, which are productive of true Joy and Comfort to us) we there- 1 Cor. 3. 5.
 fore should co-work with them toward the same End; they should edifie us in
 Knowledge and Holiness; we should therefore yield our selves to be fashioned and
 polished by them.

5. We should, in fine, obey their Doctrine by conforming our Practice thereto;
 this our Lord prescribed in regard even to the *Jewish* Guides and Doctors; *The*
Scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses his seat; all therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, Mat. 23. 3.
 that observe and do; the same we may well conceive that he requireth in respect to
 his own Ministers, the Teachers of a better Law, authorized to direct us by his own
 Commission, and thereto more specially qualified by his Grace: This is indeed the
 Crown and Completion of all; to hear signifieth nothing; to be convinced in
 our Mind, and to be affected in our Heart will but aggravate our Guilt, if we
 neglect Practice: Every Sermon we hear, that sheweth us our Duty will in effect
 be an Indictment upon us, will ground a Sentence of Condemnation, if we
 transgress it: For, as *The Earth which drinketh in the Rain that cometh oft upon it,* Heb. 6. 7, 8.
and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God, 10. 26.
so that which beareth thorns and briars, is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing, and its end
is to be burned: And, not the hearers of the law are just with God, but the doers of the Rom. 2. 13.
 law shall be justified. And it is a good Advice, that of St. James; *Be ye doers of the* Jam. 1. 22.
word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves; 'tis, he intimateth, a Fallacy
 some are apt to put upon themselves to conceit they have done sufficiently when
 they have lent an Ear to the Word; this is the least Part to be done in regard to it,
 Practice is all in all; what is it to be shewed the Way, and to know it exactly, if
 we do not walk in it, if we do not by it arrive to our Journey's End, the Salva-
 tion of our Souls? To have waited upon our Lord himself, and hung upon his

Discourse, was not available; for when in the Day of Account, some shall begin to alledge, *We have eaten, and drunk before thee, and thou hast taught in our streets; Our Lord will say, I know ye not, whence ye are, depart from me all ye workers of Iniquity.* And, it is, our Lord's Declaration in the Case, *Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine and doth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock; but every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, that built his house upon the sand.*

Many are very earnest to hear, they hear gladly, as Herod did St. John Baptist's Homilies; they receive the word with joy, as the temporary believers in the Parable did: They do as those Men did in the Prophet, *delight to know God's ways, do ask of God the ordinances of justice, do take delight in approaching God;* Or as those in another Prophet; *Who speak one to another, every one to his brother, saying, Come, I pray you, and hear what is the word that cometh forth from the Lord; And they come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as my people; and they hear thy words, but will not do them; for with their mouth they shew much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness: And lo, thou art to them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an Instrument; for they hear thy words, but they do them not: They for a time rejoice in the light of God's messengers, as those Jews did in the Light of that burning and shining lamp, St. John the Baptist; but all comes to nothing; but they are backward and careless to perform, at least, more than they please themselves, or what suiteth to their Fancy, their Humour, their Appetite, their Intest: Many Hearers will believe only what they like, or what suiteth to their Prejudices and Passions; many of what they believe will practise that only which sorteth with their Temper, or will serve their Designs, they cannot conform to unpleasant and unprofitable Doctrines: Sometimes Care choaketh the Word, sometimes Temptation of Pleasure, of Profit, of Honour allureth, sometimes Difficulties, Hazards, Persecutions, discourage from Obedience to it.*

These Particulars are obvious, and by most will be consented to; there is one Point which perhaps will more hardly be admitted, which therefore I shall more largely insist upon: 'Tis this:

6. That as in all Cases it is our Duty to defer much Regard to the Opinion of our Guides; so in some Cases it becometh us to rely barely upon their Judgment and Advice; those especially among them who excel in Dignity and Worth; who are approved for Wisdom and Integrity; their Definitions, or the Declarations of their Opinion (especially such as are exhibited upon mature Deliberation and Debate, in a solemn manner) are ever very probable Arguments of Truth and Expediency; they are commonly the best Arguments which can be had in some Matters, especially to the meaner and simpler sort of People. This upon many Accompts will appear reasonable.

It is evident to Experience, that every Man is not capable to judge, or able to guide himself in Matters of this Nature (concerning divine Truth and Conscience.) There are Children in Understanding, there are Men weak in Faith (or Knowledge concerning the Faith) there are Idiots, *ἀνους* (Men not bad, but simple) Persons occupying the room of the unlearned, unskilful in the word of righteousness, who (as the Apostle saith) need that one should teach them which be the first principles of the oracles of God.

The Vulgar Sort of Men are as undiscerning and injudicious in all things, so peculiarly in Matters of this nature, so much abstracted from common Sense and Experience; whence we see them easily seduced into the fondest Conceits and wildest Courses by any slender Artifice or fair Pretence; like children tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the slight of Men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive.

There are also some particular Cases, a competent Information and Skill in which must depend upon some Improvements of Mind acquired by more than ordinary Study and Experience: So that in them most People do want sufficient Means of attaining Knowledge requisite to guide their Judgment, or their Practice: And for such Persons in such Cases it is plainly the best, the wisest, and the safest way to rely upon the Direction of their Guides, assenting to what they declare, acting what they prescribe, going whither they conduct.

The

Luke 13. 26.
27.

Mat. 7. 21.

(Joh. 14. 21.)

Mark 6. 20.

Mat. 13. 20.

Isa. 58. 2.

Ezek. 33. 31.

32.

John 5. 35.

Rom. 14. 1.

15. 1. 5c.

Rom. 16. 18.

2 Cor. 14. 16.

3. 2. 8. 10.

Vulgo non ju-

dicium, non

veritas. Tac.

"Αχειτον δ

δύμω, M.

Ant. Eph. 4.

14.

"Αν εἰδότες ἐτέροις βέλτιον εἶναι τὰς
ἐαυτῶν ἡνίας ἐκδιδόναι τεχνικωτέροις, ἢ
ἀμων ἡπόχες εἶναι ἀνεπισήμονας, ἢ ἀ-
πολλὴν ὑποτιθέναι μᾶλλον εὐνοήμονα, ἢ
πλάσαν κινεῖν ἀπαλδευτοῖ. Naz. Or. 1.
—fide calidus, & virtute robustus, &c.
Cyp. Ep. 23. de Luciano.

The very Notion of Guides, and the Design of their Office doth import a deficiency of Knowledge, and a need of reliance upon them in such Cases; it signifieth that we are in some measure ignorant of the way, and that they better know it, and if so, plain Reason dictateth it fit that we should follow them; and indeed what need were there of Guides, to what Purpose should we have them, if we can sufficiently ken the way, and judge what we should do without them?

In the State of Learning (in which the assigning us Teachers supposeth us placed) whatever our Capacity may be, yet our Judgment at least (for want of a full Comprehension of Things, which must be discovered in order, and by degrees) is imperfect; in that State therefore it becometh us not to pretend Exercise of Judgment, but rather easily to yield Assent to what our Teachers, who see farther into the Thing, do assert; *The Learner (as Seneca saith) is bound to be ruled, while he beginneth to be able to rule himself.* *Regi debet, dum incipit se posse regere. Sen. Ep. 94.*

Δὲ μανθάνοντα πιστεῖν, A Learner should in some measure be credulous; otherwise as he will often fail in his Judgment, so he will make little Progress in Learning; for if he will admit nothing on his Master's Word, if he will question all Things, if he will continually be doubting and disputing, or contradicting and opposing his Teacher, how can Instruction proceed? He that presently will be his own Master, is a bad Scholar, and will be a worse Master. He that will fly before he is fledged, no wonder if he tumble down.

There are divers obvious, and very considerable Cases, in which Persons most contemptuous of Authority, and refractory toward their Guides, are constrained to rely upon the Judgment of others, and are contented to do it, their Conscience shewing them unable to judge for themselves; In admitting the literal Sense of Scripture according to Translations; in the Interpretation of difficult Places, depending upon the Skill of Languages, Grammar, and Criticism; upon the Knowledge of Human Arts and Sciences, upon Histories and ancient Customs; in such Cases all illiterate Persons (however otherwise diffident, and disregardful of Authority) are forced to see with the Eyes of other Men, to submit their Judgment to the Skill and Fidelity of their learned Guides, taking the very Principles and Foundations of their Religion upon Trust; And why then consonantly may they not do it in other Cases; especially in the Resolution of difficult, sublime, obscure and subtil Points, the Comprehension whereof transcendeth their Capacity?

S E R M O N XXVII.

Of Obedience to our Spiritual GUIDES and GOVERNOURS.

H E B. XIII. 17.

Obey them that have the Rule over you.

BUT farther,
The more to engage and incline us to the performing this Part of our Duty (the regarding, prizing, confiding in the Judgment of our Guides) we may consider the great Advantages, both natural and supernatural, which they have to qualify them in order to such Purposes.

1. They may reasonably be presumed more intelligent and skilful in Divine Matters than others; for as they have the same natural Capacities and Endowments with others (or rather commonly somewhat better than others, as being de-

Heb. 5. 14.

designed and selected to this sort of Employment) so their natural Abilities are by all possible means improved : It is their Trade and Faculty, unto which their Education is directed : in acquiring Ability toward which they spend their Time, their Care, their Pains ; in which they are continually versed and exercised (*having*, as the *Apostle* speaketh, *by reason of use their senses exercised to discern both good and evil*) for which also they imploy their Supplications and Devotions to God.

Many special Advantages they hence procure, needful or very conducive to a more perfect Knowledge of such Matters, and to Security from Errors ; such as are conversing with Studies, which enlarge a Man's Mind, and improve his Judgment ; a Skill of Disquisition about things of sifting and canvassing Points coming under Debate ; of weighing the Force of Arguments, and distinguishing the Colours of Things ; the Knowledge of Languages, in which the *Divine Oracles* are expressed, of Sciences, of Histories, of Practices serving to the Discovery and Illustration of the Truth, Exercise in Meditation, Reading, Writing, Speaking, Disputing and Conference, whereby the Mind is greatly enlightened, and the Reason strengthened, Acquaintance with Variety of Learned Authors, who with great Diligence have expounded the Holy Scriptures, and with most Accuracy discussed Points of Doctrine, especially with *Ancient Writers*, who living near the *Apostolical* times, and being immediately (or within few Degrees mediately) their Disciples, may justly be supposed most helpful toward informing us what was their genuine Doctrine, what the true Sense of their Writings : By such Means as in other Faculties, so in this of *Theology*, a competent Skill may be obtained ; there is no other ordinary, or probable Way ; and no extraordinary Way can be trusted, now that Men appear not to grow learned or wise by special Inspiration or Miracle ; after that all Pretences to such By-ways have been detected of Imposture, and do smell too rank of Hypocrisie.

Since then our Guides are so advantageously qualified to direct us ; it is in Matters difficult and doubtful (the which require good-Measure of Skill and Judgment to determine about them) most reasonable that we should rely upon their Authority, preferring it in such Cases to our private Discretion ; taking it for more probable, that they should comprehend the Truth than we (unassisted by them and judging merely by our own glimmering Light) can do ; deeming it good Odds on the side of their Doctrine against our Opinion or Conjecture.

2 Tim. 2. 4.

They have also another peculiar Advantage toward judging sincerely of things, by their greater Retirement from the World, and Disengagement from secular Interests ; the which ordinarily do deprave the Understandings, and pervert the Judgments of Men ; disposing them to accommodate their Conceits to the *Maxims* of worldly Policy, or to the vulgar Apprehensions of Men : Many of which are false and base ; by such Abstraction of Mind from worldly Affairs, together with fasting their Meditation on the best things, which their Calling necessarily doth put them, upon, more than is usual to other Men, they commonly get Principles and Habits of Simplicity and Integrity, which qualifie Men both to discern Truth better, and more faithfully to declare it.

Seeing then in every Faculty the Advice of the Skilful is to be regarded, and is usually relied upon ; and in other Affairs of greatest Importance, we scruple not to proceed so ; seeing we commit our Life and Health (which are most precious to us) to the *Physician*, observing his Prescriptions commonly without any Reason, sometimes against our own Sense ; we entrust our Estate, which is so dear, with the *Lawyer*, not contesting his Advice ; we put our Goods and Safety into the Hands of a *Pilot*, sleeping securely whilst he steereth us as he thinketh fit ; seeing in many such Occasions of common Life we advisedly do renounce, or wave our own Opinions, absolutely yielding to the Direction of others ; taking their Authority for a better Argument or ground of Action, than any which our Conceit,

^δΟν δ' ἂν ἡγώμην περὶ τὰ συμφέροντα
ἐαυτοῖς φρονιμώτερον ἐαυτοῖς εἶναι, τὰ τῷ
ἀνδρῶπι ὑπομιμνήσκω πείθομαι. Xen. *Pæd.* I.
^εΕν μὲν τῷ πλείν πείθεσθαι δεῖ τῷ κυ-
βερνήτῃ, ἐν δ' τῷ ζῆν τῷ λογισμῷ, δὲ
ταυτῷ βέλτερον. Aristonymus apud Stob.
Tom. 2. Tit. 3.

or a bare Consideration of the Matter can suggest to us ; admitting this *Maxim* for good, that it is a more adviseable and safe Course in Matters of Consequence to follow the Judgment of wiser Men than to adhere to our own Apprehensions : Seeing it is not Wisdom (as every Man thinks) in a doubtful Case to act upon Disadvantage, or to venture upon odds against

himself, and it is plainly doing thus to Act upon our own Opinion, against the Judgment of those who are more improved in the Way, or better studied in the Point

Point

Point than our selves; seeing in other Cases these are the common and approved Apprehensions and Practices; and seeing in this Case there is plainly the same Reason, for that there are Difficulties and Intricacies in this no less than in other Faculties, which need good Skill to resolve them; for that in these Matters we may easily slip, and by Error may incur huge Danger and Damage; why then should we not here take the same Course, following (when no other clearer Light, or prevalent Reason occurreth) the Conduct and Advice of our more skilful Guides? Especially considering, that beside ordinary, natural and acquired Advantages, they have other supernatural, both Obligations to the well-discharging this Duty, and Assistances toward it: For,

2. We may consider, That they are by God appointed, and empowered to instruct and guide us: It is their special Office, not assumed by themselves, or constituted by human Prudence, but ordained and settled by divine Wisdom for our Edification in Knowledge, and Direction in Practice: They are God's Messengers purposely sent by him, selected and separated, by his Instinct, *for this work*; they are by him *given for the perfecting of the Saints, and edifying the body of Christ*: It is by God's Warrant, and in his Name that they speak, which giveth especial Weight to their Words, and no mean ground of Assurance to us in relying upon them: For who is more likely to know God's Mind and Will, who may be presumed more faithful in declaring them, than God's own Officers, and Agents? Those whose great Duty, whose main Concernment it is to speak not their own Sense, but the Word of God? They are God's Mouth, by whom alone, ordinarily, he expresseth his Mind and Pleasure; by whom *he entreateth us to be reconciled* in Heart and Practice to him; what they say therefore is to be received as God's Word, except plain Reason, upon due Examination, do forbid.

Jer. 3. 15. *I will give you Pastors according to mine Heart, which shall feed you with Knowledge and Understanding.*
Cypr. Ep. 55.

Rom. 10. 15.
Acts 13. 2.
Eph. 4. 11, 12.
1 Cor. 12. 28.
1 Tim. 1. 11,
12. 2. 7.
Tit. 1. 3.
1 Thess. 2. 4.

2 Cor. 5. 20.

If they by Office are Teachers, or Masters in Doctrine, then we answerably must in Obligation be Disciples, which implies admitting their Doctrine, and proficiency in Knowledge thereby; If they are appointed Shepherds, then must we be their Sheep, to be led and fed by them; if they are God's Messengers, we must yield some Credence, and embrace the Message uttered by them; so the Prophet telleth us: *The Priest's Lips should keep Knowledge, and they should seek the Law at his Mouth, for he is the Messenger of the Lord of Hosts*; so the Law of old enjoined, --- *According to the sentence of the Law, which they shall teach thee, and according to the Judgment, which they shall tell thee, thou shalt do; thou shalt not decline from the sentence which they shall shew thee to the right hand, nor to the left*; so our Lord also in regard to the Scribes and Pharisees saith, *The Scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses his Chair, all therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do*; upon account of their Office, whatever they direct to (not repugnant to the divine Law) was to be observed by the People; and surely in doubtful Cases, when upon competent inquiry no clear light offereth it self, it cannot be very dangerous to follow their Guidance, whom God hath appointed and authorized to lead us; if we err doing so, we err wisely in the Way of our Duty, and so no great Blame will attend our Error.

Mal. 2. 7.

Deut. 17. 11.

Matt. 23. 3.

(Eze. 34. 16.)

3. We may consider that our Guides, as such, have special Assistance from God; to every Vocation God's Aid is congruously afforded; but to this (the principal of all others, the most important, most nearly related to God, and most peculiarly tending to his Service) it is in a special Manner most assuredly and plentifully imparted.

They are *stewards of God's various grace*; and they who dispense Grace to others cannot want it themselves; they are *co-operatours with God*, and God consequently doth co-operate with them; it is God who doth *in-g-v-n*, render them sufficient to be *ministers of the New Testament*; and they *minister of the ability which God supplieth*; Every spiritual Labourer is obliged to say with St. Paul; *By the grace of God I am what I am—I have laboured, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.*

1 Pet. 4. 10.

1 Cor. 3. 9.

2 Cor. 3. 5.

Phil. 2. 13.

1 Pet. 4. 11.

1 Cor. 15. 10.

God's having given them (as St. Paul saith) to the Church, doth imply that God hath endowed them with special Ability, and furthereth them (in their conscionable Discharge of their Ministry) with aid requisite to the Designs of *perfecting the Saints and edifying the Body* in Knowledge in Vertue, in Piety.

Eph. 4. 11, 12.

1 Cor. 12. 28.

As the Holy Ghost doth constitute them in their Charge (according to that of St. Paul in the Acts; *Take heed unto your selves, and to all the flock, over which the*

Acts 20. 28.

Holy

Holy Ghost hath made you overseers) so questionless he doth enable and assist them in administering their Function. There is a gift (of spiritual Ability, and divine Succour) imparted by their Consecration to this Office, with *the laying on the hands of the presbytery*, joined with humble Supplications for them, and solemn Benedictions in God's Name upon them. The divine Spirit, which *distributeth, as he seeth good, unto every member of the church* needful Supplies of Grace, doth bestow on them in competent measure the *word of wisdom*, and the *word of knowledge* requisite for their Employment.

God of old did in extraordinary Ways visibly communicate his Spirit unto his Prophets and Agents; the same he did liberally pour out upon the Apostles and first Planters of the Gospel; the same questionless he hath not withdrawn from those, who under the Evangelical Dispensation which is peculiarly the *ministration of the Spirit*, (unto which the Aid of God's Spirit is most proper and most needful) do still by a settled Ministry supply the room of those extraordinary Ministers; but imparteth it to them, in a Way although more ordinary and occult, yet no less real and effectual, according to Proportions answerable to the Exigencies of Need and Occasion; And by the Influence hereof upon the Pastours of his Church it is,

that our Lord accomplisheth his Promise to be *with it until the end of the world*.
Clavis scientiæ, the key of knowledge spiritual, is one of those Keys which he hath given to them, whereby they are enabled to open the Kingdom of Heaven.

Great Reason therefore we have to place an especial Confidence in their Direction; for whom can we more safely follow, than those, whom (upon such grounds of divine Declarations and Promises) we may hope that God doth guide; so that consequently in following them we do in effect follow God himself? *He that beareth you, beareth me*, might be said not only because of their relation unto Christ; but because their Word proceedeth from his Inspiration, being no other than his Mind conveyed through their Mouth.

4. We may also for our Encouragement to confide in our Guides, consider, that they are themselves deeply concerned in our being rightly guided; their present Comfort, their Salvation hereafter depending upon the faithful and careful Discharge of their Duty herein: they must render an Accompt for it; so that if by their wilful, or negligent Miscarriage we do fall into dangerous Errour or Sin, they do thence not only forfeit rich and glorious Rewards (assigned to those, *who turn many unto righteousness*) but incur woful Punishment; this doth assure their Integrity, and render our Confidence in them very reasonable; for as we may safely trust a Pilot, who hath no less Interest than our selves in the safe Conveyance of the Vessel to Port; so may we reasonably confide in their Advice, whose Salvation is adventured with ours in the same bottom, or rather is wrapped up, and carried in ours: It is not probable they will (at least designedly) misguide us to their own extreme Damage, to their utter Ruin: *If they do not warn the wicked from his wicked way to save his Life, God hath said that he will require his Blood at their hands*; and is it likely they should wittingly run such a hazard, that they should purposely cast away the Souls, for which they are so certainly accomptable? It is our Apostle's enforcement of the Precept in our Text, *Obey them that guide you; for they watch for your Souls, as they that must give an accompt*; which Argumentation is not only grounded upon the Obligations of Ingenuity and Gratitude; but also upon Considerations of Discretion and Interests, we should obey our Guides in Equity and Honesty; we may do it advisedly, because they in regard to their own Accompts at the final Judgment are obliged to be careful for the Good of our Souls.

Upon these Considerations it is plainly reasonable to follow our Guides in all Matters, wherein we have no other very clear and certain Light of Reason or Revelation to conduct us: The doing so is indeed (which is farther observable) not only wise in it self, but safe in way of Prevention, that we be not seduced by other treacherous Guides; it will not only secure us from our own weak Judgments, but from the Frauds of those *who lie in wait to deceive*. The simpler sort of Men will in effect be always led not by their own Judgment, but by the Authority of others; and if they be not fairly guided by those whom God hath constituted and assigned to that end, they will be led by the Nose by those who are concerned to seduce them: So Reason dictateth that it must be, so Experience sheweth it ever to have been, that the People, whenever they have deserted their true Guides,

have

have soon been hurried by Impostors into most dangerous Errours, and extravagant Follies; being *carried about with divers and strange Doctrines*; being *like Children* Heb. 13. 9. tossed to and fro with every wind of Doctrine. Eph. 4. 14.

It is therefore a great Advantage to us, and a great Mercy of God, that there are (by God's Care) provided for us such Helps, upon which we may commonly for our guidance in the Way to Happiness more safely rely, than upon our own Judgments, liable to Mistake, and than upon the Counsel of others, who may be interested to abuse us; very foolish and very ungrateful we are, if we do not highly prize, if we do not willingly embrace this Advantage.

I farther add, that as Wisdom may induce, so Modesty and Humility should dispose us to follow the direction of our Guides: *Ye younger* (saith St. Peter) *submit* 1 Pet. 5. 5. *your selves unto the Elder* (that is, ye Inferiours to your Superiours, ye that are the Flock to your Pastours) *and* (subjoineth he immediately) *be clothed with Humility*; signifying, that it is a Point of Humility to yield that Submission: Every modest and humble Person is apt to distrust his own, and to submit to better Judgments: And, *Not to lean to our Understanding, not to be wise in our own* Prov. 3. 5, 7. *Eyes; not to seem to know any thing, not to seem any body to ones self, in humility to* Rom. 12. 6, 10. *prefer others before our selves*, are divine Injunctions, chiefly applicable to this Case, Gal. 6. 3. in reference to our spiritual Guides; for if it be Pride or culpable Immodesty to Phil. 2. 3. presume our selves wiser than any Man, what is it then to prefer our selves in that 1 Cor. 8. 2. respect before our Teachers; as indeed we do, when without evident reason we 1 Tim. 6. 6. disregard, or dissent from their Opinion?

It is then a Duty very reasonable, and a very commendable Practice to rely upon the guidance of our Pastors in such Cases, wherein surer direction faileth, and we cannot otherwise fully satisfy our selves.

Neither in doing so (against some appearances of Reason, or with some violence to our private Conceits, do we act against our Conscience, but rather truly according to it; for Conscience (as the Word in this Case is used) is nothing else but an Opinion in Practical Matters, grounded upon the best Reason we can discern; if therefore, in any Case, the Authority of our Guides be a Reason outweighing all other Reasons apparent, he that in such a Case, notwithstanding other Arguments less forcible, doth conform his Judgment and Practice thereto, therein exactly followeth Conscience; yea, in doing otherwise, he would thwart and violence his own Conscience, and be self-condemned, adhering to a less probable Reason in Opposition to one more probable.

I do not hereby mean to assert, that we are obliged indifferently (with an implicit Faith or blind Obedience) to believe all that our Teachers say, or to practise all they bid us: For they are Men, and therefore subject to Error and Sin; they may neglect or abuse the Advantages they have of knowing better than others; they may sometimes by Infirmary, by Negligence, by Pravity fail in performing faithfully their Duty towards us: They may be swayed by Temper, be led by Passion, be corrupted by Ambition or Avarice, so as thence to embrace and vent bad Doctrines: We do see our Pastors often dissenting and clashing among themselves, sometimes with themselves, so as to change and retract their own Opinions.

We find the Prophets of old complaining of Priests, of Pastors, of Elders, and Prophets, who handled the Law, yet were ignorant of God; who erred in Vision, and stumbled in Judgment; who were profane, brutish, light, and treacherous Persons; who polluted the Sanctuary, and did violence to the Law, and profaned holy Things; who handled the Law, yet knew not God; from whom the Law and Counsel did perish; who taught for Hire, and divined for Money; who themselves departed out of the way, and caused many to stumble, and corrupted the Covenant of Levi; who destroyed and scattered the Sheep of God's Pasture.

There were in our Saviour's Time Guides, of the ferment of whose Doctrine good People were bid to beware; who transgressed and defeated the Commandment of God by their Traditions; who did take away the key of Knowledge, so that they would not enter themselves into the Kingdom of Heaven, nor would suffer others to enter; blind Guides, who both themselves did fall, and drew others into the Ditch of noxious Error,

Isa. 3. 12. *O my People, they which lead thee, cause thee to err, and destroy the way of thy paths,*

(Jer. 2. 8.) Isa. 28. 7. Jer. 10. 21. 12. 10. Jer. 23. 11. (Jer. 18. 18. 5. 31. 6. 13.) Zeph. 3. 4.

Ezek. 22. 26. Mal. 1. 6. Ezek. 7. 26. Mic. 3. 11. Mal. 2. 8. 9. Jer. 23. 11. 12. 10. Mat. 16. 6, 12. Luke 12. 1. Mat. 15. 2, 6. Luke 11. 52. Mat. 15. 14.

Matt. 15. 9. and wicked Practice : The followers of which Guides did *in vain worship God, ob-*
serviſg for Doctrine the Precepts of Men.

There have not, ſince the primitive Times of the Goſpel, wanted thoſe who
 (indulging to Ambition, Avarice, Curioſity, Faction, and other bad Affections)
 have depraved and debaſed Religion with noxious Errors, and idle Superſtitious ;
 ſuch as St. Bernard deſcribeth, &c.

Vid. Apol.
 Eccl. Ang.

We are, in Matters of ſuch infinite Concernment to our eternal Welfare, in
 Wiſdom and Duty obliged, not only without farther Heed or Care, to truſt the
 Diligence and Integrity of others, but to conſider and look about us, uſing our
 own Reaſon, Judgment, and Diſcretion, ſo far as we are capable ; we cannot in
 ſuch a Caſe be blamed for too much Circumſpection and Caution.

We are not wholly blind, not void of Reaſon, not deſtitute of fit Helps ; in
 many Caſes we have competent Ability to judge, and Means ſufficient to attain
 Knowledge ; we are therefore concerned to uſe our Eyes, to employ our Reaſon,
 to embrace and improve the Advantages vouchſafed us.

We are accomptable perſonally for all our Actions as agreeable or croſs to Rea-
 ſon ; if we are miſtaken by our own Default, or miſled by the ill guidance of
 Ezek. 3. 18. others, we ſhall however deeply ſuffer for it, and *die in our iniquity* ; the Igno-
 rance, or Errour of our Guides will not wholly excuſe us from Guilt, or exempt
 us from Punishment ; it is fit therefore that we ſhould be allowed, as to the ſum
 of the Matter, to judge and chuſe for our ſelves : For if our Salvation were wholly
 placed in the Hands of others, ſo that we could not but in Caſe of their Errour or
 Default miſcarry : Our Ruin would be inevitable, and conſequently not juſt ; we
 ſhould periſh without Blame, if we were bound as a blind and brutiſh Herd, to
 follow others.

We, in order to our Practice (which muſt be regulated by Faith and Know-
 ledge) and toward preparing our ſelves for our grand Accompt, are obliged to get
 Rom. 12. 2. a Knowledge and Perſwaſion concerning our Duty ; *to prove* (or ſearch and exa-
 Eph. 5. 10. mine) *what is that good and acceptable, and perfect will of God* ; for Ignorance (if any
 Luke 12. 48. wiſe by our Endeavour vincible) will not ſecure us : *He that* (ſaith our Lord and
 Judge) *knew not, and did commit things worthy of ſtripes, ſhall be beaten with few*
ſtripes (few ; not in themſelves, but comparatively to thoſe, which ſhall be inflict-
 ed on them, who tranſgreſs againſt Knowledge and Conſcience.)

We are bound to ſtudy Truth, to improve our Minds in the Knowledge and
 Love of it, to be firmly perſuaded of it in a rational Way ; ſo that we be not
 eaſily ſhaken or ſeduced from it.

2 Cor. 8. 7. The Apoſtles do charge it upon us, as our Duty and Concernment ; that we
 Col. 2. 7. *abound in faith and knowledge* ; that we *be rooted and built up in Chriſt, and ſtabliſhed*
 1 Cor. 15. 58. *in the faith, ſo as to be ſtedfaſt and unmovable, not to be ſoon ſhaken in mind or trou-*
 2 Theſſ. 2. 2. *bled ; to grow up and increaſe in all divine knowledge ; that the word of God ſhould dwell*
 Col. 1. 10. *richly in us in all wiſdom ; that we ſhould be filled with all knowledge, ſo as to be able*
 2 Pet. 3. 18. *to teach, and admoniſh one another ; that our love ſhould abound more and more in know-*
 2. 2. *ledge and all judgment, that we may approve things excellent* (or ſcan things different.)
 Eph. 4. 15. *that we be enriched in all the word, that is, (in all the Doctrine of the Goſpel) and in*
 Col. 1. 16. *all knowledge ; that we be filled in the knowledge of God's will in all wiſdom and ſpiritual*
 Rom. 5. 14. *underſtanding ; that we ſhould not be unwiſe, but underſtanding what the will of the*
 Heb. 5. 12. *Lord is ; That we ſhould be perfect and compleat in all the will of God* (that is, firſt,
 Phil. 1. 9, 10. *in the Knowledge of it ; then in Compliance with it) that in underſtanding we*
 2 Cor. 1. 5. *ſhould not be children, but perfect men.*
 Col. 1. 9. *We are likewise by them commanded to take heed of falſe Prophets, to try the ſpi-*
 Eph. 4. 17. *rits, whether they are of God, to ſee that no man deceive us ; to look that no man ſpoil*
 Col. 4. 12. *us by vain deceit, to try all things, and hold faſt that which is good ; which Precepts*
 1 Cor. 14. 20. *imply that we ſhould be furniſhed with a good Faculty of Judgment and compe-*
 Heb. 9. 12. *tent Knowledge in the principal Matters of Chriſtian Doctrine, concerning both*
 Matt. 7. 15. *Myſteries of Faith, and Rules of Practice. Our Lord himſelf and his Apoſtles*
 1 John 4. 1. *did not upon other Terms than of rational Conſideration and Diſcuſſion exact*
 Mat. 24. 4. *Credit and Obedience to their Words, they did not inſiſt barely upon their own*
 Eph. 5. 6. *Authority, but exhorted their Diſciples to examine ſtriſtly, and judge faithfully*
 Col. 2. 8, 18. *concerning the Truth and Reaſonableneſs of their Doctrine : Search the Scriptures ;*
 1 Theſſ. 5. 21. *for they teſtifie of me : If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not ; but if I do,*
 John 5. 39. *though ye believe me not, believe the works : So our Lord appealed to their Reaſon,*
 John 10. 37. *pro-*
 38. 15. 22,
 24. 12. 48.

proceeding upon grounds of Scripture, and common Sense: And, *I speak to wise men, judge ye what I say*; so St. Paul addressed his Discourse to his Disciples; otherwise we should be incapable to observe them. 1 Cor. 10. 15.

We are also bound to defer the principal Regard to God's Wisdom and Will; so as without Reservation or Exception, to embrace whatever he doth say, to obey what he positively doth command: Whatever Authority doth contradict his Word, or crosses his Command, in such Cases we may remonstrate with the Apostles, *If it be just before God to hearken unto you rather than unto God, judge ye*: Acts 4. 19.
And, *we ought to obey God rather than men*; We may denounce with St. Paul, Acts 5. 29.
If an Angel from heaven preach any other Gospel, let him be accursed. Gal. 1. 8.

We are obliged always to act with Faith (that is, with a Perswasion concerning the Lawfulness of what we do) for *Whatever is not of Faith is sin*: We should Rom. 14. 23.
never condemn our selves in what we try or embrace. Rom. 14. 22.

These Things considered, we may, and it much behoveth us, reserving due Respect to our Guides, with Humility and Modesty to weigh and scan their Dictates and their Orders; lest by them unawares we be drawn into Errour or Sin; like the ingenuous Beræans, who did *ἀνακρίνειν τὰς γραφάς*, *Search and examine the Scriptures if those things were so*. Our Guides are but the *helpers*, they Acts 17. 11.
are not Lords of our Faith; the Apostles themselves were not. 2 Cor. 1. 24.

We may, and are bound, if they tell us Things evidently repugnant to God's Word, or to sound Reason and common Sense, to dissent from them; if they impose on us Things evidently contrary to God's Law, to forbear Compliance with them; we may in such Cases appeal *ad legem & testimonium*; we must not admit a *non obstante* to Isa. 8. 20.
God's Law. Plebs timens Dominum separare se debet à peccatore præposito. Cypr.

If other Arguments (weighed in the Balance of honest and impartial Reason, with cautious and industrious Consideration) do overpoize the Authority of our Guides; let us in God's Name adhere to them; and follow our own Judgments; it would be a Violation of our Conscience, a Prevarication toward our own Souls, and a Rebellion against God to do otherwise; when against our own Mind, so carefully informed, we follow the Dictates of others, we like Fools rashly adventure and prostitute our Souls.

This Proceeding is no wise inconsistent with what we delivered before; for this due Wariness in examining, this Reservation in assenting, this Exception in Practice, in some Cases, wherein the Matter hath Evidence, and we a Faculty to judge, doth no-wise hinder, but that we should defer much Regard to the Judgment of our Guides; that we should in those Cases, wherein no Light discovereth it self out-shining their Authority, rely upon it; that where our Eyes will not serve clearly to direct us, we should use theirs; where our Reason faileth to satisfy us, we should acquiesce in theirs; that we should regard their Judgments so far, that no petty Scruple emerging, no feint Semblance of Reason should prevail upon us to dissent from their Doctrine, to reject their Advice, to disobey their Injunctions.

In fine, Let us remember, that the Mouth of Truth which bid us to *beware of the bad doctrine of those who sat in Moses's Chair*, did also charge us to *observe all they taught and enjoined*; that is, all not certainly repugnant to the Divine Law. Matt. 15. 14.
In effect, if we dissent from the Advices of our sober Teachers appointed for us by God; we shall in the end have Occasion to bewail with him in the Proverbs, 33. 8.
How have I hated instruction, and my heart despised reproof? And have not obeyed the voice of my Teachers, nor inclined mine ear to them that instructed me? Prov. 5. 12, 13.

To these Things I shall only add one Rule, which we may well suppose comprised in the Precept we treat upon; which is, that at least we forbear openly to dissent from our Guides, or to contradict their Doctrine; except only, if it be not so false (which never, or rarely can happen among us) as to subvert the Foundations of Faith, or Practice of Holiness. If we cannot be internally convinced by their Discourses, if their Authority cannot sway with us against the prevalence of other Reasons, yet may we spare outwardly to oppose them, or to slight their Judgment; for doing thus doth tend as to the Disgrace of their Persons, so to the Disparagement of their Office, to an obstructing the efficacy of their Ministry, to the infringement of Order and Peace in the Church: For when the inconsiderate

People shall see their Teachers distrusted and disrespected ; when they perceive their Doctrine may be challenged, and opposed by plausible Discourses ; then will they hardly trust them, or comply with them in Matters most certain and necessary ; than which Disposition in the People there cannot happen any thing more prejudicial or baneful to the Church.

But let thus much serve for the Obedience due to the Doctrine of our Guides : Let us consider that which we owe to them in reference to their Conversation and Practice.

The following their Practice may well be referr'd to this Precept ; for that their Practice is a kind of living Doctrine, a visible Law or Rule of Action ; and because indeed the Notion of a Guide primarily doth imply Example ; that he which is guided should respect the Guide as a Precedent, being concerned to walk after his Footsteps.

Most of the Reasons which urge Deference to their Judgment in teaching, do in Proportion infer Obligation to follow their Example (which indeed is the most easie and clear way of Instruction to vulgar Capacity ; carrying with it also most efficacious Encouragement and Excitement to Practice :) They are obliged, and it is expected from them to live with especial Regularity, Circumspection, and Strictness of Conversation ; they are by God's Grace especially disposed and enabled to do so ; and many common Advantages they have of doing so ; (a more perfect Knowledge of Things, Firmness of Principles, and Clearness of Notions ; a deeper Tincture, and more savoury Relish of Truth, attained by continual Meditation thereon ; consequently a Purity of Mind and Affection, a Retirement from the World and its Temptation, Freedom from Distraction of worldly Care, and the Incumbrances of Business, with the like.)

They are often charged to be exemplary in Conversation (as we before shewed) and that involveth a correspondent Obligation to follow them. They must (like John. 5. 35. St. John Baptist) *be burning and shining lights ; stars in God's right hand ; lights of the world ; whose light should shine before men, that men may see their good works ; and by their Light direct their Steps.*

Apoc. 16. 20.
Mat. 5. 14, 16.

They are proposed as Copies, which signifies, that we must in our Practice transcribe them.

We are often directly commanded to imitate them ; *ὡς μιμηταὶ τῆ πίστεως, whose faith imitate ye* (that is, their faithful Perseverance in the Doctrine and Practice of Christianity) saith the *Apostle* in this Chapter.

Their Conversation is safely imitable in all Cases, wherein no better Rule appeareth, and when it doth not appear discordant from God's Law, and the Dictates of sound Reason ; for supposing that Discordance, we cease to be obliged to follow them ; as when our Lord prescribeth in respect to the Pharisees ; Matt. 23. 3. *Whatever they bid you observe, that observe and do ; but do not after their Works ; for they say and do not.*

It is indeed easier for them to speak well than to do well ; their Doctrine therefore is more commonly a sure Guide than their Practice ; yet when there wanteth a clearer guidance of Doctrine, their Practice may pass for instructive ; and a probable Argument or Warrant of Action.

SERMON XXVIII.

Of SELF-LOVE in general.

2 TIM. III. 1.

For Men shall be lovers of themselves.

SAINTE Paul in this Place out of a propheticall Spirit instructing or warning his Disciple *Timothy*, concerning *difficult times*, or the calamitous State of Things which should ensue; induced upon the World, as it useth to happen, by a general Prevalency of vicious Dispositions and Practices among Men, doth thence take Occasion by a Specification of their Vices to characterize the Persons, who should concur to produce that hard State.

Among those Vices he placeth Self-love in the Van, as the capital and leading Vice; intimating thereby, that it is of all in its nature most heinous, or in its influence most noxious.

Hæc omnia mala ab eo velut fonte manantia, quod primum posuit seipsum amantes. August. in Joh. Tract. 123.

This indeed is of all Vices the most common, so deeply radicated in our Nature, and so generally over-spreading the World, that no Man thoroughly is exempted from it, most Men are greatly tainted with it, some are wholly possessed and acted by it; this is the Root, from which all other Vices do grow, and without which hardly any Sin could subsist; the chief Vices especially have an obvious and evident Dependence thereon.

All Impiety doth involve a Loving our selves in undue manner and measure; so that we set our selves in our Esteem and Affection before God; we prefer our own Conceits to his Judgment and Advice; we raise our Pleasure above his Will and Authority; we bandy Forces with him, and are like the prophane *Belshazzar*, of whom it is said, *Thou hast lifted up thy self against (or above) the Lord of Heaven.*

From hence particularly by a manifest extraction, are derived those chief and common Vices, Pride, Ambition, Envy, Avarice, Intemperance, Injustice, Uncharitableness, Peevishness, Stubbornness, Discontent and Impatience. For,

We over-value our selves, our Qualities and Endowments, our Powers and Abilities, our Fortunes and external Advantages; hence are we so proud, that is, so lofty in our Conceits, and fastuous in our Demeanour.

We would be the only Men, or most considerable in the World; hence are we ambitious, hence continually with unsatiable Greediness we do affect and strive to procure Increase of Reputation, of Power, of Dignity.

We would engross to our selves all Sorts of good Things in highest Degree; hence enviously we become jealous of the Worth and Vertue, we grudge and repine at the Prosperity of others; as if they defalked somewhat from our Excellency, or did eclipse the Brightness of our Fortune.

We desire to be not only full in our Enjoyment, but free and absolute in our Dominion of Things; not only secure from needing the Succour of other Men, but independant in regard to God's Providence; hence are we so covetous of Wealth, hence we so eagerly scrape it, and so carefully hoard it up.

We can refuse our dear Selves no Satisfaction, although unreasonable or hurtful; therefore we so readily gratifie sensual Appetites in unlawful or excessive Enjoyments of Pleasure.

Being blinded or transported with fond Dotage on our selves, we cannot discern, or will not regard what is due to others; hence are we apt upon Occasion to do them wrong.

Love

Love to our selves doth in such manner suck in and swallow our Spirits, doth so pinch in and contract our Hearts, doth according to its computation so confine and abridge our Interests, that we cannot in our Affection, or in real Expression of Kindness tend outwards; that we can afford little Good-will, or impart little Good to others.

Deeming our selves extremely wise and worthy of Regard, we cannot endure to be contradicted in our Opinion, or crossed in our Humour; upon any such Occasion our Choler riseth, and easily we break forth into violent Heats of Passion.

From the like Causes it is, that we cannot willingly stoop to due Obeisance of our Superiours, in Reverence to their Persons, and Observance of their Laws; that we cannot contentedly acquiesce in the Station or Portion assigned us by Providence; that we cannot patiently support our Condition, or accept the Events befalling us.

In fine, if surveying all the several Kinds of naughty Dispositions in our Souls, and of Miscarriages in our Lives, we do scan their particular Nature, and search into their original Causes; we shall find inordinate Self-love to be a main Ingre-

Est ergo ista ad peccandum amore sui propensio, peccatum originale, Sc. Zuving. apud Bell. de Amiff. grat. 4. 2.

dient, and a common Source of them all: So that a *Divine* of great Name had some Reason to affirm, that *Original Sin* (or that innate Distemper from which Men generally become so very prone to Evil, and averse to Good) doth consist in

Self-love, disposing us to all kinds of Irregularity and Excess: *St. Paul* therefore might well set this in the Front of all those Sins, which depraved the Age he spake of; they having all such a Dependence on it.

It is therefore very requisite that we should well understand this Fault, that we may be the better able to curb and correct it; to which Purpose I shall endeavour, by God's help, somewhat to declare its Nature.

The Word *Self-love* is ambiguous; for all Self-love is not culpable; there is a necessary and unavoidable, there is an innocent and allowable, there is a worthy and commendable Self-love.

There is a Self-love, originally implanted by God himself in our Nature, in order to the Preservation and Enjoyment of our Being; the which is common to us with all Creatures, and cannot any-wise be extirpated; for *No man* (as *St. Paul* saith) *ever yet hated his own Flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it*: Every Man living,

Panis ematur, olus, vini sextarius; adde Quæ humana sibi doleat natura negatis. Hor. Sermon. 1. 1.

by a natural and necessary instinct, is prompted to guard his Life, shunning all Dangers threatening its Destruction; to pourvey for the Support and Convenience of it; to satisfy those natural Appetites, which importunately crave Relief, and

without intolerable Pain cannot be denied it; to repel or decline whatever is very grievous and offensive to Nature; the Self-love that urgeth us to do these things, is no more to be blamed than it can be shunned.

Reason farther alloweth such a Self-love, which moveth us to the pursuance of any thing apparently good, pleasant, or useful to us, the which doth not contain in it any essential Turpitude or Iniquity; doth not obstruct the attainment of some true or greater Good; doth not produce some over-balancing Mischief; doth not infer harm to the World, or wrong to other Men.

Πᾶς δὲ τὸς αἰρεῖ τὸ βέλτιστον ἐαυτοῦ, δὲ ἐπιεικὲς περὶ ἀρχῆς πᾶσι. Arist. Eth. 9. 8.

Reason dictateth and prescribeth to us, that we should have a sober Regard to our true Good and Welfare; to our best Interest, and solid Content; to that, which (all things being

rightly stated, considered and computed) will in the final event prove most beneficial, and satisfactory to us: A Self-love working in prosecution of such things, common Sense cannot but allow and approve.

Quia tutela certissima ex proximo est, sibi quisque commissus est. Sen. Ep. 121.

God himself hath to these suggestions of Nature and dictates of Reason, adjoined his own Suffrage, having in various ways declared it to be his Will and Pleasure, that we should tender our real and final Good. He, as the Author of Nature, and Fountain of Reason, may be supposed to ordain that, unto which Nature doth so potently incline, and which Reason so clearly prescribeth. He plainly hath to every Man committed himself in charge, so as to preserve his Being from Ruin, and to enjoy it with Comfort. He by making so rich a Provision for the Sustenance of our Lives, and Satisfaction of our Appetites, by framing our Bodies to relish Delight, and suiting so many Accommodations in wondrous Correspondence

respondence to our Senses, hath sufficiently intimated it to be his Pleasure, that we should in reasonable Measure seek them and enjoy them; otherwise his Care would have been vain, and his Work useless; yea, he might seem to have laid an ill Design to tempt and ensnare us: he certainly had no such Intent, but as he made us out of Goodness, as he made us capable of tasting Comfort, as he hath furnished us with Means of attaining it; so he meaneth that we should partake thereof.

He also expressly hath commanded us to love all Men, not excluding our selves from the Number; to love our Neighbour, and therefore our selves; who of all are nearest to our selves, who occur as the first Objects of Humanity and Charity; whose Needs we most sensibly feel; whose Good is in it self no less considerable, than the single Good of any other Person; who must first look to our own Good, before we can be capable to love others, or do any good to our Neighbour.

He therefore hath made the Love of our selves to be the Rule and Standard, the Pattern, the Argument of our Love to others; imposing on us those great Commands of *loving our neighbours as our selves*, and *doing us we would be done unto*; which imply not only a Necessity, but an Obligation of loving our selves.

He doth enforce Obedience to all his Commands, by promising Rewards, yielding immense Profit and transcendent Pleasure to us; and by threatening Punishments grievous to our Sense; which Proceeding is grounded upon a Supposition that we do and ought greatly to love our selves, or to regard our own Interest and Pleasure. Matt. 16. 26.

He doth recommend Wisdom or Vertue to us, as most agreeable to Self-love; most eligible, because it yieldeth great Benefit to our selves; because (as the *Wise-man* saith) *he that getteth it, doth love his own soul; he that keepeth it shall find good.* Prov. 15. 8.
16. 11. 17.

Aristotle saith of a vertuous Man, that he is the greatest *self-lover*; *Δόξεις δ' ἄν* Ethic. 9. 8;
ὁ πῶτος εἶναι μᾶλλον φίλ᾽ αὐτός· ἀπονέμει γὰρ ἑαυτῷ πᾶν κέλεται, καὶ μάλιστα ἀγαθόν, καὶ χαρίζεται ἑαυτῷ πᾶν κυριότατον.

He dissuadeth from Vice, as therefore detestable, because the embracing it doth imply Hatred of our selves, bringing Mischief and Damage to us; because (as the *Wise-man* doth express it) *he that sinneth wrongeth his own soul; he that despiseth instruction, despiseth his own soul; he that committeth injury, hateth his own soul.* Prov. 8. 36.
15. 36. 29. 24.

He commendeth his Laws to our observance, by declaring them in their design and tendency chiefly to regard our Good and Advantage; made apt to preserve the Safety and Quiet, to promote the Wealth and Prosperity of our Lives; to bring Ease and Comfort to our Minds, Grace and Ornament to our Names, Salvation and Happiness to our Souls. Deut. 10. 12.
Mic. 6. 8.
Neh. 9. 13.
Prov. 3. 4.
Eccl.

In fine, God chargeth and encourageth us to affect and pursue the highest Goods whereof we are capable; most ample Riches, most sublime Honours, most sweet Pleasures, most complete Felicity; *He* (saith *St. Paul*) *will render to them, who by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory, and honour, and immortality, eternal life*; to seek such Things is the highest Instance, is the surest Argument of Self-love that can be; he therefore, who obligeth, who encourageth us thereto, doth plainly shew his Approbation of a Self-love. Rom. 2. 7.

So it appeareth, that all Self-love is not culpable, but that some kind thereof is very commendable; how then shall we distinguish; how shall we sever (to use the Prophet's Language) *the precious from the vile*?

To this we may answer in general, that all Love of our selves, which is unreasonably grounded, or which is excessive in its Degrees and Limits; or which venteth it self in wrong instances; or which driveth our Mind, Will, and Affections toward bad Objects; or which produceth Effects noxious to our selves or others; is culpable. If we esteem our selves for things not true, or really for things indifferent or mean, for things no-wise excellent or valuable; if we affect our selves beyond compass, so as to postpone the Love of God, or exclude the Love of our Neighbour; if out of regard to our selves we do things base, or mischievous; if thence we dote upon vain Profits, embrace foul Pleasures, incur sinful Guilt, expose our selves to grievous Danger, Trouble, Remorse and Punishment; if thereby we are engaged to forsake our true Interest, and forfeit our final Happiness; then assuredly it is a foolish and vicious Self-love; it is indeed not a proper, but

but a false and equivocal Love, usurping that goodly Name; it is a real Hatred, or Enmity disguised under the Semblance of Friendship; it more properly may be called Cruelty, Treachery, Flattery, Mockery, Delusion, and Abuse of our selves.

But for a more distinct and clear Resolution of the Case, we may do well to consider the proper Acts of Love, which do constitute it, or inseparably do adhere thereto; such as these, a good Esteem of the Person, which is the Object of our Love; an earnest Good-will toward him, or desire of his Good; a complaisance in Good, and dissatisfaction in Evil arriving to him; a readiness to yield, or procure Good to him; a desire of Union and Enjoyment, that is, of intimate Conversation and Entercourse with him, a deference of regard to him, a compliance with his Desires, and care to please him. Now if these Acts toward our selves are in their Kind, in their Grounds, in their Measures conformable to Reason, Piety, and Justice, then is our Self-love innocent or worthy, if they are not so, it is criminal and vicious.

If we do rightly esteem our selves (both absolutely and in comparison to others; if we desire to our selves what is fit and just; if we are pleased with true Goods, and displeased at real Evils incident to us; if we do in lawful ways endeavour to procure things truly convenient, and beneficial to us; if we maintain a faithful and chearful Correspondence with our selves; if we have a sober Regard to our selves agreeable to our Nature and State; if we comply with the Dictates of our Reason, and satisfy our Desires conforming thereto; then do we love our selves innocently, then are we true Friends to our selves.

But if we over-value our selves, if we do wish to our selves things incommodious or hurtful, if we are delighted or dissatisfied in false Shows of Good or Evil befalling us; if we strive to acquire for our selves things bad or mischievous; if our Converse with our selves is naughty or vain; if we make indecent Applications to our selves; if we stoop to our fond Humours, or soothe our unreasonable Desires; then is our Self-love spurious; then are we indeed Enemies to our selves.

Farther, toward an exact discussion and trial of this Case, we should do well, divesting our selves of Selfishness, to consider our selves, as other Persons, or abstractedly as mere Objects of those Acts which Love doth imply; for what Rectitude, or what Obliquity there would be in them in regard to any Object, the same would be in reference to our selves. For instance,

If we should value any Person justly according to his real Worth, allowing a just Rate to his Vertue, to his Parts, to his Endowments, to his Advantages of Nature or Fortune; not ascribing to him things which belong not to him, nor over-prizing those he hath, nor preferring him in any respect before those which are his Superiours or Equals therein; we shall herein do wisely and justly; but if (having our Judgment any-wise perverted) we do admire a Person beyond his Worth, and advance him above his Rank; if we overlook his apparent Defects and Blemishes, or take them for Excellencies, and yield them Applause; What is this but Folly and Dotage, tempered with Iniquity? And if it be such in regard to another, it is no less such in respect to our selves.

If to any Person we should wish things suitable, commodious, and advantageous, by obtaining which, he, without any wrong or prejudice to others, might be considerably benefitted, we shall herein act humanly, and like good Friends; but if we desire things to him, which do not become or besit him; which will do him mischief, or which he cannot have without injury and damage to others, are we not herein notoriously unkind or unjust? The Case is the same transferred to our selves.

If we should observe any Man by Occurrences happening to him well improved in his Condition, thriving in an honest Way, prosperous in good Undertakings, growing in worthy Accomplishments of Soul, to find Satisfaction therein would be greatly laudable; and so it would be to condole, if we should see any Man to fall into any grievous Disaster or Calamity; but should we behold a Man (although in false Appearance bettered, yet really) prejudiced and endamaged (as when one is enriched by cozenage or rapine, is advanced by flattery or sycophantry, is famed for base or vain Exploits, is immersed into Care and Trouble, is exposed to Danger and Temptation, is fallen into the Enchantments of Pleasure) are we not, if we take Pleasure therein, very silly, or very cruel? And if we should observe good Physick administred to a sick Neighbour, or that he is engaged in painful Exercise for his Health, should it not be absurd for us to be sorry thereat?

For

for the same Reasons we are blameable, if we do rejoyce when that we prosper in bad Courses, or enjoy sinful Pleasures, or fall into dangerous Temptations ; if we distaste the wholesome Physick of Adversity dispensed by Providence, or dislike the needful Exercises of Duty by God prescribed to us.

If we do yield our Advice and Aid to our Neighbour, in furtherance of any Design, which is honest and beneficial to him, we then unquestionably do well ; but if we do abet or encourage him in unjust or mischievous Enterprizes ; if we render our selves Panders to his unlawful Desires, Factors for his unjust Profits, Complices of his wicked Practices, Advocates of his Sins, is this true Love, is this faithful Friendship ? No surely ; nor is it such toward our selves, when we employ our Faculties in contrivance or atchievement of any unlawful Designs, however satisfactory to our Desires.

If we should indifferently (without regard to the Laws of Piety, Justice, Humanity, or Decency) espouse the Interests of any Person, so that for the promoting his Designs, advancing his Profit, gratifying his Humour or Pleasure, we should violate the Commands of God, we should neglect the Publick Good, we should work Injury or Mischief to our Neighbour, would this Dealing be allowable ? Neither would it be so, if for our own Sake, in regard to our private Interest we should thus behave our selves.

2. If we do affect to hold free, sincere, chearful, kind Conversation with any Person for mutual Instruction and Comfort, this is sociable and friendly ; but if we maintain frothy, foul, malicious, any-wise pestilent Discourse, apt to corrupt, or to annoy him, this is loathsome ; and so it is, if we keep such intercourse with our selves, harbouring vain, impure, unjust, uncharitable Thoughts in our Minds.

If we should defer Regard to any Man, answerable to his Worth, we should thereby practise according to the good Rules of Humanity ; but should we so affect or fancy any Man that we should care for no Man else, should pay no due Respect, or perform any Office of Kindness elsewhere ; should take no Man's Word, or mind any Man's Opinion beside, nor care to converse with any other ; would this be Love ? Would it not be ridiculous Fondness ? It is no less, if in regard to our selves, we are so morose, surly, or neglectful.

If we should comply with any Man's reasonable Desire, this were fair and courteous ; if we should confide in the probable Assistance of any Person, this were modest Prudence ; but if we should entirely conform our Practice to the Will or Humour of another, against the Dictates of our own Reason, and to the Harm of our selves or others ; would this be Love, would it not rather be vile and pitiful Slavery ? If we should without any ground, yea against plain Reason rely upon the Help or Direction of another, would this be Love, would it not rather be wild Presumption ? The same therefore it must be in us, if we in like manner are devoted to our own Will, or confident in our own Ability.

If we should commend any Man for good Qualities or good Deeds, this is honest ; if we should encourage him in good Undertakings, this is charitable ; but to applaud his Defects, to bolster him in ill Practice, this is Flattery and Treachery ; and in so doing towards others, we are not Friends to our selves, but Traitors and Parasites.

By such Reflexions and Comparisons we may, I think, competently understand the Nature of that Bastard-self-love, which is so vicious in it self, and productive of so many Vices : But more fully to display, and withal to dissuade us from this Vice, I shall particularly insist upon the common Sorts thereof, shewing the peculiar Unreasonableness of each, and the Mischiefs consequent from it : They are indeed usually combined and complicated in Practice ; and have much Affinity both in their Nature and Fruit ; but I shall as well as I can abstract them one from the other, and so treat on them distinctly ; they are these, *Self-conceit*, *Self-confidence*, *Self-complacency*, *Self-will*, *Self-interest*. These I shall handle in the following Discourses.

SERMON XXIX.

Of SELF-CONCEIT.

2 TIM. III. 2.

For Men shall be lovers of themselves, &c.

1. **T**HE first and most radical kind of vicious Self-Love is *Self-conceitedness*; that which St. Paul calleth *τὸ υπερφρονεῖν*, to overween, or to think highly of ones self beyond what he ought to think. This doth consist in several Acts or Instances.

Sometimes we in our Imagination assume to our selves Perfections not belonging to us in Kind or in Degree; we take our selves to be other Men than we are; to be wise, to be good, to be happy when we are not so, at least to be far wiser, better and happier than we are. The Pleasure naturally springing from a good Opinion of our selves doth often so blind our Eyes, and pervert our Judgment that we see in us what is not there, or see it magnified or transformed into another Shape than its own; any Appearance doth suffice to produce such Mistakes, and having once entertained them, we are unwilling to depose them; we cannot endure by severe Reflexion on our selves to correct such pleasant Errors; hence commonly we presume our selves to be very considerable, very excellent, very extraordinary Persons, when in truth we are very mean and worthless; so did St. Paul suppose when he said, *If a man think himself to be something when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself*; such was the Case of that Church in the *Apocalypse*; *Thou sayest I am rich and increased in goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched and miserable*; they were like Men in a Dream, or in a Frenzy, who take themselves for great and wealthy Persons, when indeed they are in a sorry and beggarly Condition; into the like extravagancies of Mistake we are all likely to fall, if we do not very carefully and impartially examine and study our selves.

Gal. 6. 3.

Apoc. 3. 17.

Again, sometimes we make vain Judgments upon the Things we do possess, prizing them much beyond their true Worth and Merit; consequently overvaluing our selves for them; the most trivial and pitiful Things (things which in themselves have no worth, but are meer Tools, and commonly serve bad Purposes; Things which do not render our Souls any-wise better, which do not breed any real Content, which do not conduce to our Welfare and Happiness) we value at a monstrous rate, as if they were the most excellent and admirable Things in the World: Have we Wit? How witless are we in prizing it, or our selves for it; although we employ it to no good End, not serving God, not benefiting Men, not furthering our own Good, or any-wise bettering our Condition with it; although we no otherwise use it, than vainly to please our selves or others, that is, to act the Part of Fools or Buffoons. Have we Learning or Knowledge? Then are we rare Persons; not considering that many a bad, many a wretched Person hath had much more than we, who hath used it to the abuse of others, to the torment of himself; that Hell may be full of learned Scribes, and subtle Disputers, of eloquent Orators and profound Philosophers; who *when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful, but became vain in their Imaginations, and their foolish Heart was darkened*, not considering also how very defective our Knowledge is, how mixt with Error and Darkness; how useless and vain, yea how pernicious it is, if not sanctified by God's Grace, and managed to his Service. Have we Riches? Then are we brave Men, as fine and glorious in our Conceit as in our outward Attire; although the veriest Fools, the basest and most miserable

Rom. 1. 21.
Ardua res hæc est, opibus non tradere mores.

Mat. 11. 6.

able of Men, that go on the Ground, do exceed us therein ; although (as *Aristotle* saith) *Most either not use it, or abuse it.*

Τῶν ποτῶν οἱ μὲν ἐχρῶνται τὰς πα-
ταρὰ διὰ μεγαλοῦν, οἱ δὲ ἀδελφῶνται
δι' ἁσώτῃαν. *Arist. apud Plut. in Pelop.*

Although our Wealth affordeth us no real Benefit or Comfort, but exposeth us to numberless Snares, Temptations, and Mischiefs ; although it hath no Stability, but easily may be taken from us. Have we Reputation ? How doth that make us highly to repute our selves in a slavish Imitation of others ? Yet nothing is less substantial, nothing is less felt, nothing is so easily lost, nothing is more brittle and slippery than it ; a Bubble is not sooner broken, or a Wave sunk, than is the Opinion of Men altered concerning us. Have we Power ? What doth more raise our Minds ? Yet what is that commonly but a dangerous Instrument of Mischief to others, and of Ruin to our selves ; at least an Engagement to Care and Trouble ? What but that did render *Caligula*, *Nero*, and *Domitian* so hurtful to others, so unhappy to themselves ? What but that hath filled the World with Disasters, and turned all History into Tragedy ? Have we prosperous Success in our Affairs ? Then we boast and triumph in our Hearts ; not remembring what the *Wise-man* saith, *The prosperity of Fools* *Prov. 1. 32.* *destroyeth them ;* and that Experience sheweth, Prosperity doth either usually find or make us Fools ; that the wisest Men (as *Solomon*) the best Men (as *Hezekiah*) have been befooled by it : Thus are we apt to over-value our Things, and our selves for them.

Rarus enim ferme sensus communis in illa, Fortuna——

Juv. Sat. 8.
2 Chron. 32. 25.

There is no way indeed, wherein we do not thus impose upon our selves, either assuming false, or misrating true Advantages ; the general ill Consequences of which Misdemeanor are, that our Minds are stult with Dreams and phantastick Imaginations ; instead of wise and sober Thoughts ; that we misbehave our selves toward our selves, treating our selves like other Men than we are, with unseemly Regard ; that we expect other Men should have like Opinions, and yield answerable Deferences to us ; and are, if we find it otherwise, grievously offended ; that we are apt to despise or disregard others, demeaning our selves insolently and fastuously toward them : that we are apt to seek and undertake Things, which we cannot attain or atchieve ; that we neglect the Succours needful to help, or comfort us, and the like ; which will appear more plainly, by considering the several Objects or Matters, in which Self-conceit is exercised : They are especially Three ; *Intellectual Endowments ; moral Qualities ; Advantages of Body, Fortune and outward State.*

1. We are apt to conceit highly of our selves, upon presumption of our *intellectual Endowments* or Capacities, whether *natural* (as *Wit, Fancy, Memory, Judgment,*) or *acquired* (as *Learning, Skill, Experience*) especially of that which is call'd *Wisdom*, which in a manner comprehendeth the rest, and manageth them ; whereby we rightly discern what is true, and what is fit to be done in any Case proposed : This we are prone in great Measure to arrogate, and much to pride our selves therein : The World is full as it can hold of Wise-men, or of those who take themselves to be such ; not only absolutely, but comparatively, in Derogation and Preference to all others : May it not be said to us, as *Job* did to his Friends, *No doubt but ye are the People, and Wisdom shall die with you ?* Do we not fancy our selves incomparably wise, so that all our Imaginations are deep and subtile, all our Resolutions sound and safe, all our Opinions irrefragably certain ; all our Sayings like so many Oracles, or indubitable Maxims ? Do we not expect that every Man's Judgment should stoop to ours ? Do we not wonder that any Man should presume to dissent from us ? Must any Man's Voice be heard, when we speak ? Do we not suppose that our Authority doth add huge weight to our Words, that 'tis unquestionably true because we say it ; that it is Presumption, 'tis Temerity, 'tis Rudeness hardly pardonable to contest our Dictates ? This is a common Practice, and that which is often prohibited and blamed in Scripture ; *Be not wise in thine own Eyes*, saith the *Wise-man* ; And, *Be not wise in your own Conceits*, saith the *Apostle* : And, *I say, through the Grace given unto me, to every Man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every Man the measure of Faith.*

1 Cor. 3. 18.
*Μωρὸς ᾔνε-
θω, ἵνα ᾔνῃ-
ται σοφός.*
Vid. Chrys. in Phil. Or. 7.

*Οἱ πῶν-
ται, τοῖς
συχαι αἰσῶσι.*
Prov. 3. 7.
Rom. 12. 16.
12. 3.

The great Reasonableness of which Precepts will appear, by considering both the Absurdity and the Inconveniences of the Practice which they forbid.

If we do reflect either upon the common Nature of Men, or upon our own Constitution, we cannot but find our Conceits of our Wisdom very absurd : For how can we take our selves for wise, if we observe the great Blindness of our Mind, and Feebleness of human Reason, by many palpable Arguments discovering it self ? If we mark how painful the Search, and how difficult the Comprehension is of any Truth ; how hardly the most sagacious can descry any thing, how easily the most judicious mistake ; how the most learned everlastingly dispute, and the wisest irreconcilably clash about Matters seeming most familiar and facile ; how often the most wary and steady do shift their Opinions ; how the wiser a Man is, and the more Experience he gaineth, the less confident he is

Quamcunque partem rerum humanarum divinarumque comprehenderit, ingenti copia quærendarum ac discendarum fatigaberis. Sen. Ep. 88.

in his own Judgment, and the more sensible he groweth of his Weakness ; how dim the Sight is of the most perspicacious, and how shallow the Conceptions of the most profound ; how narrow is the *Horizon* of our Knowledge, and how im-

mensely the Region of our Ignorance is distended ; how imperfectly and uncertainly we know those few Things, to which our Knowledge reacheth ; how answerably to such Experience we are told in *sacred Writ*, that *Every Man is brutish in his Knowledge* ; that *the Lord knoweth the Thoughts of Man, that they are Vanity* ; that *Vain Man would be wise, though he be born like an Asses Colt* (that is, he is naturally wild and stupid) that *Wisdom is hid from the Eyes of all Men, and is not found in the Land of the Living* ; that *The Thoughts of mortal Men are miserable, and our Devices uncertain* ; if we, I say, do consider such Things, how can we but find it strange, that any Man should admire his own Wisdom, seeing that he thereby doth exempt himself from the common Adjunct of his Nature, and forgetteth himself to be a Man.

Jer. 10. 14.
Psal. 94. 11.
1 Cor. 3. 20.
Job 11. 12.
Job 28. 21, 22.
Sap. 9. 14.

If also a Man particularly reflecteth on himself, the same Practice must needs appear very foolish ; for that every Man thence may discover in himself peculiar Impediments of Wisdom ; every Man in his Complexion and in his Condition, may find things apt to pervert his Judgment, and obstruct his Acquisition of true Knowledge : Is his Temper Sanguine ? Thence becometh he quick, rash, credulous, confident, and peremptory, slippery and fickle : Is it Phlegmatick ? Thence is he slow and heavy, diffident, pertinacious, and stiff in his Conceits : His Mind is either soft and limber, so as easily to receive the Impressions of Falshood speciously represented ; or hard and tough, so that he cannot readily admit Instruction in Truth, or Correction of Error. His Wealth distracteth, or his Poverty disturbeth his Thoughts ; Prosperity swelleth his Mind up into vain Presumptions and Satisfaction ; or Adversity sinketh it down into unreasonable Despondencies and Dislikes of things : Plenty breedeth Sloth, Want createth Trouble, indisposing him to think well ; Ease doth rust his Parts, and Business weareth them out ; Inclination, Interest, Company, Prejudice do forcibly sway his Apprehensions ; so that no Man can get himself into, or keep himself steady in a perfect Balance, requisite for exact Judgment of things ; no Man therefore can obtain a degree of Wisdom, whereof he may with any reason be conceited ; the wisest Men surely upon such Experience have been little satisfied with their share ; *Surely* (saith one) *I am more brutish than any man, and I have not the understanding of a man* : and, *So foolish* (saith another) *was I, and ignorant, I was as a beast before thee* : This Conceit- edness therefore is very absurd, and an Argument of notable Ignorance and Folly ; neither is there perhaps any more plain Instance or Demonstration of general Folly reigning among Men, than this, that commonly we are so blind and stupid as not to discern and resent our own Folly ; *If any man* (saith St. Paul) *thinketh that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth not any thing yet as he ought to know* : that is, If any Man conceiteth himself to be considerably wise or intelligent, 'tis a plain Sign, that he is very ignorant, and understandeth little to any Purpose.

Prov. 13. 2.
Psal. 73. 22.

1 Cor. 8. 2.

So it is if we consider our selves singly ; and it is more so, in comparison to others ; for what Ground can a Man have of arrogating to himself a peculiarity of Wisdom or Judgment ? To deem himself extraordinary in that, to which there are no other than ordinary Means of arriving ? To fancy himself wiser than any other, when as (secluding accidental Differences, that cannot be accounted for) all Men have the same Parts and Faculties of Soul, the same Means and Opportunities of Improvement ; the same right and liberty of judging about things. Did not he, who *formeth the spirit of man within him*, put into every Man that heavenly

Mark,

Mark, whereby we discern and judge of things? Is not every Man concerned in that saying of *Elibu*; *there is a spirit in men, and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding*? Do not the Fountains of Knowledge (natural Delight, divine Revelation, human Instruction, continual Experience) stand open to all; and are no less common to Men, than is the Air they breathe, and the Sun, which equally shineth on them all? Is God, the Donor of Wisdom, partial in the distribution of it; doth not that Overture reach indifferently to all, *If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally, — and it shall be given him.* Ev. Begetois. LXX. Job 32. 8. Jam. 1. 5. May not others be as Inquisitive, as Industrious, as Sincere as we in the search of Truth, why not then as Successful in finding it? Is there any private Chink, through which Light shineth only upon us, or Truth may be espied? Is there any cunning by-path, in which we alone, with more expedition and security than others, in the common Roads, can travel on toward Knowledge? What Patents have we to shew for Monopoly of Reason? What Right have we to engross any Knowledge? Who hath granted us a Privilege of sure Judgment, or an exemption from Error? How can we in trial of Things claim more than a single Vote? Or, Why should our word have more weight than any other? May not any Man, with as much reason, prefer his Judgment before ours, as we before his; and if we blame him for it, do we not thereby condemn our selves for doing the like? If we do know but the same Things, or frame the same Judgments with others, how can we be conceited of that which is promiscuous; if we pretend to abstruse Notions, or hold forth Paradoxes, how can that be ground of Boasting, seeing the Cause standeth contested by Authority, no less than our own, and that it is vain to triumph over the Opinions of others before we have conquered them? Why in such Cases is it not reasonable to presume that among the many Dissenters from us, there are some who have as much Sense as we, and who have weighed the Matter with no less Care, no less Indifferency? In fine, may not any Man with good Cause, propound to us that expostulation in *Job*? *Hast thou heard the secret of God, and dost thou restrain Wisdom to thyself? what knowest thou that we know not? what understandest thou which is not in us?* Job 15. 8.

Such Conceitedness therefore is very absurd; and it is no less hurtful, for many great Inconveniencies, many sad Mischiefs spring from it, such as gave the Prophet cause to denounce, *Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own conceit*: It hath many ways bad influence on our Souls, and on our Lives; it is often our Case, which was the Case of *Babylon*, when the Prophet said of it, *Thy Wisdom and thy Knowledge hath perverted thee; for thou hast said in thy heart, I am, and none else beside me.* Isa. 5. 21. Isa. 47. 10.

It is a great Bar to the getting Wisdom, to the receiving Instruction and right Information about things; for he that taketh himself to be abundantly Knowing, or incomparably Wise, will not care to learn, will scorn to be taught; he thence becometh more incapable of Wisdom than a meer Idiot; so did *Solomon* observe, *Seest thou, said he, a man wise in his own conceit? there is more hope of a Fool than of him*; of a Fool that is sensible of his own Ignorance, there may be hope, that he may by Instruction become Wise; but he that taketh himself to want no Instruction, or to be above Learning, is in a desperate Condition. Hac est hominis vera sapientia imperfectum esse se nosse. Hier. contra. Pelag. 1. 5. Prov. 20. 12. Puto multos potuisse ad sapientiam pervenire, nisi putassent se pervenisse. Sen. de tranq. an. 1.

It rendeth Men in doubtful or difficult Cases, unwilling to seek, and unapt to take Advice; he will not care for, or admit any Counsellor but himself; hence he undertaketh and easily is deceived, and incurreth disappointment, damage, disasters in his Affairs. As it is most incident to weak, inconsiderate, lazy Persons, who have not a Capacity, will not yield attention, or take pains to get right Notions of Things, so it doth smother all Industry, Consideration, and Circumspection; for such Persons think they need no labour in searching Truth, no care in weighing Arguments, no diligence in observing Things; they can easily, at first sight, descry all, and penetrate to the bottom of Things; they have at easie rates the Pleasure of fancying themselves wise; why should they spend farther Pains to dispossess themselves of that Pleasure, or to introduce another less Satisfactory? Thus is the *slugard* (as *Solomon* saith) *wiser in his own conceit, than seven men that can render a reason.* Prov. 26. 16.

It rendeth us very rash and precipitant in judging; for the first shews of Things, or the most slender Arguments, which offer themselves, being magnified, and

and aggravated from Opinion concerning our selves, do sway our Judgment, and draw forth a sudden Resolution from us; it must, we presently suppose, be very reasonable, because it seemeth reasonable to us.

Hence also we persist, obstinate and incorrigible in Error; for what Reason can be efficacious to reclaim him, whose Opinion is the greater Reason? What Argument can be ponderous enough to outweigh his Authority? How can he (the Man of Wisdom, the perspicacious and profound Person) yield that he hath erred? How can he part with the Satisfaction of being always in the right, and endure the Affront of being any time baffled?

It rendreth Men peevish and morose, so as to bear on body that dissenteth from them, nor to like any thing which doth not hit their Fancy; to cross their Opinion and Humour, is to derogate from their Wisdom; and being in their Apprehension so injured, they find Cause to be angry.

It rendreth them insolent and imperious in Conversation, so as to dictate, and impose their Conceits upon others. He that is conceited of his own Wisdom, will imagine, that upon that Advantage he hath a Right to prescribe, others an Obligation to submit; *eo ipso* he becometh a common Master and Judge; and they are culpable, who will not yield him a credulous Ear, who will not stand to his Decision.

Hence also do Men become so carping and censorious; for if any Man's Words do not jump with their Notions, if any Man's Actions be not conformable to their Rules, they straightway rise up to condemn them of Folly, of Faultiness.

Yea, hence Men become intolerably Pragmatical; for they conceit themselves better to know another's Concernment than he himself doth, and so will intrude his Advice, will be angry if his Advice be not followed.

To such Inconveniencies and Iniquities this ill-disposition exposeth us, and to many others; for it is indeed that in effect, which the Holy-Scripture representeth as the Source of all impious and wicked Courses; to which Men betray themselves, while taking themselves to be wise, they do stiffly adhere to their own Imaginations and Devices, although contrary to the Prescriptions of divine Wisdom, to the Dictates of common Reason, to the Admonitions of sober and good

Men: *We will (say they in the Prophet) walk after own devices, and we will every one do the imagination of his evil heart; and, I have spread out my hands all the day unto a rebellious People: Which walketh in a way that is not good, after their own Thoughts.* And, *If he bleisseth himself, saying, I shall have peace, though I walk in the imagination of my heart: and, So I gave them unto their hearts lusts, and they walked in their own Counsels:* These are descriptions of bad Men, implying Self-conceit to be the Root of their Impiety.

2. Again, we are apt to conceit highly and vainly of our moral Qualities and Performances; taking our selves for Persons rarely good, perfect and blameless; apprehending no defects in our Souls, or miscarriages in our Lives, although indeed we are as full of blemishes, we are as guilty of Faults as others; *There is (saith the Wise-man) a Generation that are pure in their own eyes, and yet is not washed from their filthiness;* to this Generation we belong if we admire our Virtues, if we justify our Lives, if (as it is said of the Pharisee) *we trust in our selves, that we are righteous.*

This Practice doth include great Folly, and it produceth great Mischiefs.

'Tis very foolish; and argueth the greatest Ignorance that can be; for such is the Imperfection, the Impotency, the Impurity of all Men, even of the wisest and best Men (discernible to them who search their Hearts, and try their Ways, strictly comparing them to the Rules of Duty, God's Laws, and the Dictates of Reason) that no Man can have Reason to be satisfied in himself, or in his Doings: Every Man looking into himself, shall find his Mind so pestered with vain and filthy Thoughts; his Will so perverse, so froward, so weak, so unsteady; his Desires so fond and unwarrantable; his Passions so disorderly and ungovernable; his Affections so misplaced, or at least so cold, and dull in regard to their right Objects; his Resolutions toward Good so weak and slack; his Intentions so corrupt, or mix'd with oblique Regards; he that observeth his Actions, shall in the best of them (as to the Principles whence they rise, as to the Ends they drive at, as to the Manner of their Performance) find so many great defaultances, that he will see Cause rather to abhor than admire himself.

Who,

Who, let me ask, doth love God with all his Soul, so as to place in him his total Content and Delight, so as to do all things out of Love to him, with a Regard to his Honour and Service? So as to be willing and glad to part with all things for his Sake? Who hath that constant and lively Sense of God's Benefits and Mercies that he should have? Who hath a perfect Resignation of Will to his Pleasure, so as to be displeased with no Event dispensed by his Hand? Who hath such a Vigour of Faith and Confidence in him, as will support him in all Wants, in all Distresses, in all Temptations, so as never to be disquieted, or discouraged by them, so as to *cast on God* (as he is commanded) all the *cares* of his Soul, and *burthens* of his Life? Who constantly maintaineth a Fervour of Spirit, a Steadiness of Resolution, a clear and calm Frame of Soul, an abstractedness of Mind from worldly Desires and Delights? Who continually is fervent and undistracted in his Devotion? Who with an unwearied and incessant Diligence doth watch over his Thoughts? Who doth entirely command his Passions, and bridle his Appetites? Who doth exactly govern his Tongue? Who is perpetually circumspect over his Actions? Who loveth his Neighbour as himself, seeking his good, and delighting therein as in his own; being sorry for his Adversities, as if they had befallen himself? Who feelth that contrition of Spirit, that Shame, that Remorse for his Sins, or that detestation of them, which they deserve? Who is duly sensible of his own unworthiness? Very few of us surely, if we examine our Consciences, can answer, that we are they who perform these Duties; and if not, where is any Ground of Self-Conceit? How much cause rather is there of dejection, of displeasure, of despising and detesting our selves?

There have indeed been Sects of Men (such as the *Novatians*, and the *Pelagians*) who have pretended to Perfection and Purity; but these Men one would think did never read the Scripture, did never consult Experience, did never reflect on their Minds, did never compare their Practice with their Duty; had no Conscience at all, or a very blind and stupid one. *Who can say, I have made my Heart clean, I am pure from my sin?* was a Question of Solomon, to which he thought no Man could answer affirmatively of himself: *If I justify my self, my own Mouth shall condemn me; if I say I am perfect, it shall prove me perverse*; was the Asseveration of that Person, whose Vertue had undergone the severest Trials; *In many things we offend all*; was the Confession of an *Apostle* in the Name of the wisest and best Men.

The Donatists
— *remissionem peccatorum sic datis, quasi nullum habeatis ipsi peccatum, &c.*
Opt. lib. 2.
Prov. 20. 9.
Eccl. 7. 20.
Job 9. 20.
15. 15. 25. 4.
4. 18. 9. 2.
(Psal. 143. 2.)
Jam. 3. 2.

Such Men indeed (in contemplation of themselves, and of their doings) have ever been ready to think meanly of themselves, to acknowledge and bewail their unworthiness, to disclaim all Confidence in themselves, to avow their Hope wholly to be reposed in the Grace and Mercy of God; (in his Grace for Ability to perform somewhat of their Duty, in his Mercy for Pardon of their Offences;) to confess themselves (with *Jacob*) *Less than the least of God's mercies*; with *David*, that they are *Worms, and no Men*; with *Job*, that they are *vile, and unable to answer God*, calling them to accompt, *in one case of a thousand*; that they *abhor themselves, and repent in dust and ashes*; that *after they have done all, they are unprofitable Servants*: And is he not very blind, who doth see in himself those Perfections, which the greatest Saints could not descry in themselves? Is he not infinitely vain, that fancies himself more worthy, than they did take themselves to be?

Job 40. 4.
42. 6. 9. 2.
Luke 17. 10.

In fine, Every Man is in some kind and degree bad, sinful, vile; it is as natural for us to be so, as to be frail, to be sickly, to be mortal: There are some bad Dispositions common to all, and which no Man can put off without his Flesh; there are some, to which every Man (from his Temper, Inclination and Constitution of Body or Soul) is peculiarly subject; the which by no Care and Pain can be quite extirpated; but will afford, during Life, perpetual Matter of Conflict and Exercise to curb them; Conceit therefore of our Vertue is very foolish.

And it breedeth many great Mischiefs.

Hence doth spring a great Security, and Carelessness of correcting our Faults; for taking our selves to be well, we see not any need of Cure, thence seek none, nor admit any.

Matt. 9. 12.
John 9. 41.

Yea, hence riseth a Contempt of any means conducive to our amendment, such as good Advice, and wholsom Reproof; to advise such an one is to accuse him wrongfully, to reprove him is to commit an Outrage upon his presumed Integrity of Vertue. Hence also proceedeth a neglect of imploring the Grace and Mercy of

of

of God ; for why should Persons of so great Strength crave Succour ; how should they beg Pardon, who have so little Sense of Guilt ? It is for a weak Person
 Luke 18. 13. to cry, Lord help me ; it is for a *Publican* to pray, *God be merciful unto me a Sinner.*

It breedeth Arrogance and Presumption even in Devotions, or Addresses to God, inducing such Persons in unseemly manner to justify themselves before God, to claim singular Interest in him, to mind him, and as it were to upbraid him with their worthy Deeds, to thank him for their imaginary Excellencies ; like the conceited *Pharisee* ; God, *I thank thee, that I am not as other Men, Extortioners, Unjust, Adulterers—I fast twice a Week, I give Tythes of all that I possess.* They cannot demean themselves toward God as miserable Sinners, who fancy themselves as admirable Worthies and Gallants in Vertue.

Also a natural result thereof is a haughty Contempt of others, venting it self in
 Luke 18. 9. a supercilious and fastuous Demeanour : So it was in the *Pharisees, who* (saith St. Luke) *trusted in themselves, that they were righteous, and despised others.* Such Persons observing, or suspecting Defects and Misbehaviours in others, but discerning none in themselves, do in their Opinion advance themselves above their Brethren, and accordingly are prone to behave themselves toward them : Such Men as they are, the especially good Men, the Godly, the Saints, the Flower of Mankind, the Choice ones, the Darlings of God, the Favourites of Heaven ; the special Objects of divine Love and Care : Others are impure and profane, rejectaneous and reprobate People, to whom God beareth no good-will or regard ; hence proceedeth a contemptuous Disregard or Estrangedness toward other Men ; like that of those *Separatists* in the *Prophet*, who notwithstanding they were a *People provoking God to anger continually to his Face*, were yet in Conceit of their own special Purity ready to say, *Stand by thyself, come not near to me, for I am holier than thou* : Whereas those who soberly reflecting on their Nature, their Hearts, their Ways, do frame a right Judgment of themselves, can hardly esteem any Man worse than themselves ; they perceive themselves so frail, so defectuous, so culpable, as to find great reason for their Compliance with those *Apostolical* Precepts ;
 Phil. 2. 3. *In lowliness of Mind, let each Man esteem others better than himself ; In honour prefer one another.*
 Rom. 12. 10.

This likewise disposeth Men to expect more than ordinary regard from others ; and they are much displeased, if they find it not in Degree answerable to their Conceit of themselves ; taking them for silly, envious, or injurious Persons, who forbear to yield it : Such excellent Persons must in all Things be humoured, and cockered, otherwise you greatly wrong them.

Hence also such Men easily become discontented and impatient ; for if they be crossed in any thing, if any Misfortune toucheth them, they take it very ill ; supposing they deserve it not, but are worthy of better Usage and Fortune.

In fine, as this causeth a Man to behave himself untowardly in respect to all others (toward God, and toward his Neighbour) so thence he most unbeseemingly carrieth himself toward himself, he is no faithful Friend, no good Companion to himself, but a fond *Mignon*, a vile Flatterer, or a profane Idolater of himself : For (like *Narcissus*) being transported with Conceit of his own incomparable Beauty or Excellency, he maketh love to, and courteth himself ; finding Delight in such
 Psal. 36. 2. Conceit, he by all means cherisheth it, glozing and *flattering himself* (as the *Psalms* hath it) *in his own Eyes* ; representing his Qualities to his Imagination in false shapes, he devoutly adoreth those Idols of his Brain. Farther,

3. Self-conceit is also frequently grounded upon other inferior Advantages ; upon gifts of Nature (as Strength, Activity, Beauty) upon gifts of Fortune (so called) as Birth, Wealth, Dignity, Power, Fame, Success ; upon these Things Men ordinarily much value themselves, and are strangely puffed up with vain Opinion ; taking themselves from them to be great and happy Persons ; but seeing (as we touched before) these Things are in themselves little valuable (as serving no great Purpose, nor furthering our true Happiness) seeing they are not commendable (as not depending on our free Choice, but proceeding from Nature or Chance) seeing they are not durable or certain, but easily may be severed from us ; the Vanity of Self-conceit founded on them is very notorious, and I shall not insist more to declare it ; I shall only recommend the *Prophet's* Advice concerning
 Jer. 9. 23, 24. such Things ; *Let not the wise Man glory in his Wisdom ; neither let the mighty Man glory*

glory in his Might ; let not the rich Man glory in his Riches ; but let him that glorieth, glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me ; that I am the Lord, which exercise loving-kindness, judgment and righteousness in the Earth : That is, Nothing within us, or about us, should elevate our Minds, excepting the Assurance, that God doth govern the World, being ready to protect and succour us ; to dispense Mercy and Justice to us ; so that how weak and helpless soever in our selves, yet confiding in him, we shall never be overwhelmed by any Wrong or Misfortune.

So much concerning Self-Conceit, the other Parts of vicious Self-Love may be referred to another Occasion.

SERMON XXX.

Of Self-Confidence, Self-Complacence, Self-Will, and Self-Interest.

2 TIM. III. 2.

For Men shall be lovers of themselves, &c.

Of Self-Confidence.

II. **A**Nother like culpable kind of Self-Love, is that of *Self-Confidence* ; when Men beyond Reason, and without regard unto God's Providence, do rely upon themselves, and their own Abilities, imagining that, without God's Direction and Help, by the Contrivances of their own Wit and Discretion, by the prevalency of their own Strength and Courage, by their industrious Care, Resolution and Activity they can compass any Design, they can attain any Good, they can arrive to the utmost of their Desires, and become sufficiently happy, not considering that on God (*in whose hand our Dan. 5. 23. Breath is, and whose are all our ways ; in whose hand is the Soul of every living thing, Job. 12. 10. and the Breath of all Mankind*) all our Being, and all our Ability do absolutely depend ; that he manageth and turneth all Things, dispensing Success according to his Pleasure ; that no good thing can be performed without the Supply and Succour of his Grace, nothing can be achieved without the Concurrency of his Providence ; that, *The way of Man is not in himself, it is not in Jer. 10. 23. Man that walketh to direct his Steps ; that, The Preparations of the Heart in Man, Prov. 16. 1. and the answer of the Tongue is from the Lord ; that, although, A Man's Heart devi- Prov. 16. 9. seth his way, yet the Lord directeth his Steps ; that, No King is saved by the multitude 19. 21. 20. 24. of an Host, a mighty Man is not delivered by much strength, a Horse is a vain thing Psal. 33. 16, for safety ; The Race is not to the swift, nor the Battle to the strong : That (as St. Paul, 17. Ecclef. 9. 11. 2 Cor. 3. 5. 2. 16. one abundantly furnished with Abilities suiting his Designs as any Man can be, doth acknowledge) we are not sufficient of our selves to think any thing, but our sufficiency is of God : These Oracles of Truth, and even Dictates of Reason, no less than Principles of Religion they consider not, who confide in their own Abilities, with which Nature or Fortune do seem to have furnished them.*

This is that instance of Self-Love, which the *Wise-man* biddeth us to beware of: *Trust* (saith he) *in the Lord with all thine Heart, and lean not to thine own Under- Prov. 3. 5, 6. standing ; In all thy Ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy Paths.* This is that which he condemneth as foolish, and opposite to wise Proceeding ; *He that Prov. 28. 26. trusteth in his own Heart, is a Fool ; but whose walketh wisely, shall be delivered.*

—æquum mi
animum ipse
parabo

This is that which smothereth Devotion, and keepeth Men from having recourse to God ; while they think it needless to ask for that which they have in their Power, or have Means of obtaining ; this consequently depriveth them of Divine Aid, which is afforded only to those who seek it, and confide therein.

This often engageth Men to attempt Things rashly, and causeth them to come off unhappily ; God interposing to cross them, with purpose to cure their Error, to confound their Presumption.

Iſa. 10. 13.

From hence, if God ever suffereth their Attempt to prosper, they sacrilegiously and profanely arrogate to themselves the Success, *sacrificing to their own Net*, and saying with him in the Prophet, *By the strength of my Hand have I done it, and by my Wisdom, for I am prudent.*

This causeth most Men to fail of true Content here, and of Happiness finally ; while taking them to be, where they are not, at home, within their own hand, or reach, they neglect to search after them Abroad, there where they only do lie, in the Hand and Disposal of God.

Of Self-Complacence.

Dan. 4. 30.

Luke 12. 19.

III. A like Act of blameable Self-Love, is *Self-Complacence*, that is, greatly delighting in ones self, or in the Goods which he fancies himself to enjoy, or in the Works which he performeth : When Men in Contemplation of their Works and Atchievements go strutting about, and saying with that vain Prince, *Is not this great Babylon, that I have built ?* When reflecting on their Possessions they applaud and bless themselves, like the Rich Man in the Gospel, *Soul* (saith he, looking up- on his accumulated Store) *thou hast much Goods laid up for many Years* : Such vain Soliloquies do Men ordinarily make : Thou hast (saith a Man to himself) rare Endowments of Soul ; a wonderful Skill and Ability in this and that Matter ; thou art Master of excellent Things ; thou hast managed very important Business, hast accomplished hard Designs, hast atchieved brave Feats, with great Dexterity and admirable Success, by thy Wit and Industry ; thou hast framed and vented very curious Orations, very facetious Speeches, very nervous and pithy Discourses ; thou hast put Obligations upon this Man, and that ; thou hast got much Credit and Interest amongst Men ; the World much looketh on thee, loveth and prizeth thee hugely, resoundeth with thy Fame and Praise ; surely thy Worth is notable, thy Deserts are egregious ; how happy art thou in being such a Person, in performing such Things, in enjoying such Advantages ? Thus with a spurious and filthy Pleasure do Men reflect upon and revolve in their Minds the Goods they deem themselves to possess, and the favourable Occurrences that seem to befall them ; being fond of their own Qualities and Deeds as of their Children, which, however they are in themselves, do always appear handsome and towardsly unto them ; any little thing is great and eminent, any ordinary thing is rare, any indifferent thing is excellent to them, because it is theirs ; out of any thing, how dry and insipid soever it is in it self, they suck a vain and foolish Pleasure.

Hence is that honest and pure Delight, which they should taste in Faith and Love toward God, in the Hope of future Celestial Things, in the Enjoyment of Spiritual Blessings, in the Conscience of virtuous Practice, quite choaked or greatly damped.

Hence also that hearty Contrition, and sober Sadness, which by Reflexion upon their great Defects, and frequent Miscarriages they should continually maintain in their Souls, is utterly stifled.

Hence also that charitable Complacency in the Welfare and Condolency with the Adversities of their Brethren is suppressed ; Hence cannot they be satisfied with any thing done by others, they cannot apprehend the worthy Deserts, they cannot render due Commendation to the good Deeds of their Neighbour ; for while Men are so pleased with their own imaginary Felicities, they cannot well discern, they will not be duly affected with the real Advantages, or Disasters of themselves, or of others.

Of Self-Will.

IV. Another culpable kind of Self-Love, is *Self-Will* ; (*αὐθάδεια*, pleasing ones self in his Choice, and proceeding without, or against Reason) when a Man unaccountably

accountably or unreasonably, with obstinate Resolution, pursueth any Course offensive to others, or prejudicial to himself, so that he will not hearken to any Advice, nor yield to any Consideration diverting him from his Purpose, but putteth off all, with a—*Stat pro ratione voluntas*: Say what you can, let what will come on it, I will do as I please, I will proceed in my own way; so I am resolved, so it shall be.

This is that generally which produceth in Men the wilful Commission of Sin; although apparently contrary to their own Interest and Welfare, depriving them of the best Goods, bringing on them most heavy Mischiefs; this causeth them irreclaimably to persist in Impenitence. Hence do they stop their Ears against wholesome Counsel, they harden their Hearts against most pathetical and softning Discourses, they *withdraw their Shoulder, they stiffen their Neck* against all sober Precepts, Admonitions, and Reproofs; they defeat all Means and Methods of Correction; they will not hear God Commanding, Entreating, Promising, Threatning, Encouraging, Chastising; they will not regard the Advices and Reprehensions of Friends; the most apparent Consequences of Damage, Disgrace, Pain, Perdition upon their ill Courses will not stir them; their Will is impregnable against the most powerful Attempts to win and better them: Let all the Wisdom in the World sollicit them, with a *Turn at my Reproof*, it shall have Occasion to complain; *They would none of my Counsel, they despised all my Reproof.*

This is that also more particularly, which breedeth so much Mischief to the Publick, which pestereth and disturbeth private Conversation: This maketh Conversation harsh, and Friendship intolerable.

Hence are Men in their demeanour so peevish and froward, so perverse and cross-grain'd, so stiff and stubborn; with much inconvenience to others, and commonly with more to themselves.

Hence will they not submit to the Commands of their Superiours; they will not comply with the Customs of their Country, they will not be complaisant in Conversation; but every where raise factious Oppositions, kindle fierce Contentions, maintain disorderly Singularities: They care not how, for enjoying their Humour, they break the Peace of the World, they disturb the Order of Things, they create Tumults and Troubles in any Society; they bring Vexations and Mischiefs on others, on themselves. They do not consider, or value the great harm they bring upon the Publick, nor how much themselves do suffer by it; so they have their Will, what if the State be plunged into confusion and trouble; what if their Neighbours be sorely incommoded; what if themselves lose their Ease and Pleasure?

It must be just as they will have it; what if ten to one think otherwise; what if generally the wisest Men are agreed to the contrary, what if the most pressing necessity of Affairs do not admit it; what if publick Authority (those whom all Equity doth constitute Judges, and to whom God himself hath committed the arbitration thereof) do not allow it; yet so it must be, because they fancy it, otherwise they will not be quiet; so do they sacrifice the greatest Benefits of Society (publick Order and Peace, mutual Love and Friendship, common Safety and Prosperity) to their private Will and Humour.

This is that, which St. Paul so often did forbid in Word; and discountenanced in Practice: For the Edification of others, to procure Advantage to his Endeavours, to shun Offence, to preserve Concord and Amity, he waved pleasing his own Desire and Fancy, he complied with the Conceits and Humours even of those who were most ignorant and weak in Judgment; he even subjected and enslaved himself to the Pleasure of others, directing us to do the like: *We then (saith he) that are strong, ought to bear the Infirmities of the weak, and not to please our selves: Let every one of us please his Neighbour for his good to Edification: For even Christ pleased not himself (he adjoineth the great Example of our Lord to enforce his own.)* Again; *Give none Offence, saith he, Even as I please all Men in all things, not seeking mine own Profit, but the Profit of the many, that they may be saved: Be ye (herein) followers of me, as I am of Christ; and again, To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak; I am made all things to all Men, that I might by all means save some: Though I be free from all Men (that is, although I have no Superiour, that*

Περὶ ὧν ἀν' ἀπαξ τι εἶπω, μικρὸν με αὐδῶ πύδῃ. Nero apud Dion. Cass.
'Οὐ ἀμαρτίαις ἰχθυοῦσιν ὁμοῖες. Synes. Calv.
Vid. Sen. Ep. 23. de Ben. 438. Arr. 2. 15.

—τὰ τῶ δ' ἀνδρὶ μὴτ' εἴλω φίλῳ,
Μήτε ξυνείλω, ὅς τις αὐτάρχει φρονεῖν
Πέποιθε, δέλεος τὸς φίλους ἡγάμην. Eurip.

Ἀυθάδεια ἐ-
ρημία ξύννοι-
α. Plat. ad
Dionem, Ep. 4.

can command me, or oblige me in these Matters) *yet have I made my self Servant to all, that I might gain the more.* What this excellent Person was in this Instance of managing Ecclesiastical Discipline, and promoting the Gospel, that both in the same Cases, and in the Prosecution of all other Designs, in all our Conversations and Practices should we likewise be.

We should in no Case indulge our own Humour or Fancy, but ever look to the Reason of the Thing, and act accordingly, whatever it requireth.

We should never act, without striving with competent Application of Mind to discern clearly some Reason why we act; and from observing the Dictates of that Reason no unaccountable Cause should pervert us; blind Will, head-strong Inclination, impetuous Passion should never guide, or draw, or drive us to any thing; for this is not to act like a Man, but as a Beast, or rather worse than a Beast; for Beasts operate by a blind Instinct indeed, but such as is planted in them by a superiour Wisdom, unerringly directing them to a pursuit of their true Good; but Man is left *in manu consilii sui*, is obliged (under sore Penalties) not to follow blind Inclinations or Instinct; but to act with serious Deliberation and Choice, to observe explicate Rules and Resolutions of Reason.

Sap. i. 12.

Deut. 30. 19.

1 Cor. 10. 24.

Of Self-Interest.

V. Another culpable sort of Self-Love is that of *Self-Interest*; when Men inordinately or immoderately do covet and strive to procure for themselves these worldly Goods, meerly because profitable or pleasant to themselves, not considering or regarding the good of others, according to the rules of Justice, of Humanity, of Christian Charity; when their Affections, their Cares, their Endeavours do mainly tend to the Advancement, Advantage or Delight of themselves; they little caring what cometh on it, who loseth, who suffereth thereby.

They look upon themselves as if they were all the World, and no Man beside concerned therein, or considerable to them; that the good State of Things is to be measured by their Condition; that all is well, if they do prosper and thrive; all is ill, if they are disappointed in their Desires and Projects.

The good of no Man, not of their Brethren, not of their Friends, not of their Country doth come with them under Consideration; what Scandals do arise, what Disorders are committed, what Mischiefs are caused they matter not, if they get somewhat thereby: What if the *Church* or *State* be reproached, what if the Neighbourhood be offended, or disturbed, what if the World cry out and complain, if they become richer by it, or have their Passion gratified, or find some Pleasure in it?

This is the chief Spring of Injustice: For from hence it is, that oftentimes Men regard not what Courses they take, what Means they use (how unjust, how base soever they be) toward the compassing their Designs: Hence they trample upon Right, they violate all Laws and Rules of Conscience, they falsify their Trusts, they betray their Friends, they supplant their Neighbour; they flatter and collogue, they wind about, and shuffle any way, they detract from the worth and vertue of any Man, they forge and vent odious Slanders, they commit any sort of Wrong and Outrage, they (without regard or remorse) do any thing which seemeth to further their Design.

This is the great Source of Uncharitableness, for from hence Men affect no Man otherwise, than he seemeth able to serve their turn; the Poor therefore is ever slighted and neglected by them as unserviceable, the Rich only is minded and respected as capable to promote their Ends, they become hard-hearted toward others; not considering or commiserating their Case; they will part with nothing from themselves to those who need their Relief; they delight in nothing which doth not make for their Advantage: All their shews of Friendship and Respect are mercenary, and mere Trade; they do nothing *gratis*, or for Love.

This is the great Root of all the Disorders and Mischiefs in the World; this Self-love prompteth Men to those turbulent Scramblings and Scufflings, whereby good Order is confounded; this engageth them to desert their Stations, to transgress their Bounds; to invade and encroach upon others with Fraud and Violence: Did Men with any conscionable Moderation mind and pursue their own private Interest, all those fierce Animosities, those fiery Contentions, those *bitter Emulations*,

tions, those rancorous Grudges, those calumnious Supplantings, those perfidious Cozenages, those outrageous Violences, those factious Confederacies, those seditious Murmurings and tumultuous Clamours would vanish and cease; Self-Interest it is that gives life and nourishment to all such Practices, the which embroil the World in Discord and Disorder. It is not out of pure Madness or wanton Humour that commonly Men engage themselves and others in those base and troublesome Courses, but out of design to get by it; hope of Gain to be raked out of publick Ruins and Disorders, is the Principle that moveth them, the Reward they propound to themselves for their Pains in meddling, toward the promoting them; like those who set fire on the Town, that they may get Opportunity to rifle and pillage.

—nullum
furor egit
in arma.
Bella petunt
magna viâ
mercede.—

He that taketh himself to be as but one Man (naturally like and equal to others) conceiving that he ought to consider the Interest and right of other Men in the same Rank with his own, that he in reason should be contented with that share which ariseth to him by fair means; who thence resolveth to be satisfied with his own Lot, to abide quiet in his Station, to yield the same Deference and Compliance to others which he can presume, or pretend to receive from them; who desires only to enjoy the Gifts of Providence, and the Fruits of his Industry, in a due Subordination to the Publick Peace and Welfare; he will not easily strive or struggle for Preferments, he will not foment Emulations or Factions for his Advantage, he will never design to cozen or supplant, to detract or calumniate for Advancement of his Ends; he thence will not contribute to the Mischiefs and Troubles in the World.

Ut quisque maximè ad suum commodum refert quæcunque agit, ita minimè est vir bonus; ut qui virtutem præmio metiantur, nullam virtutem nisi malitiam putant, Sc. Cic. de Leg. 1.

Self-Interest therefore is the great Enemy to the Common-weal; that which perverteth all Right, which confoundeth all Order, which spoileth all the Convenience and Comfort of Society.

It is a Practice indeed (this Practice of pursuing Self-Interest so vehemently, so especially above all things) which is looked upon and cried up as a clear and certain Point of Wisdom; the only solid Wisdom, in Comparison whereto, those Precepts which prescribe the Practice of strict Justice, ingenuous Humanity, free Charity, are but pedantical Titles, or Notions merely chimerical; So the World now, more than ever, seemeth to judge; and accordingly to act; and thence is the State of Things visibly so bad, and calamitous; thence so little Honesty in Dealings, thence so little Settlement in Affairs are discernible. But how false that Judgment is, will appear, if the Case be weigh'd in the Balance of pure Reason; and most foolish it will appear, being scanned according to the Principles of Religion.

In Reason, is it not very absurd, that any Man should look upon himself as more than a single Person; that he should prefer himself before another, to whom he is not in any respect superiour; that he should advance his own Concernment above the publick Benefit, which comprehendeth his Good, and without which his Good cannot subsist? Can any Man rationally conceive, that he can firmly thrive, or persist in a quiet and sweet Condition, when he graspeth to himself more than is due or fitting, when he provoketh against himself the Emulation, the Competition, the Opposition, the Hatred and Obloquy of all, or of many other Persons?

May not any Man reasonably have the same Apprehensions and Inclinations as we may have? May not any Man justly proceed in the same manner as we may do? Will they not, seeing us mainly to affect our private Interest, be induced, and in a manner forced to do the like? Thence what End can there be of propping, and scrambling for Things? And in the Confusion thence arising, what Quiet, what Content can we enjoy?

Again; Doth not Nature, by implanting in our Constitution a love of Society, and averſation from Solitude, inclinations to Pity and Humanity, pleasant Complacencies in obliging and doing Courtesies to others, appetites of Honour and good Esteem from others, aptness to approve and like the Practices of Justice, of Fidelity, of Courtesie, of Beneficence, Capacities to yield Succour and Benefit to our Brethren, dictate unto us, that our Good is inseparably connected and complicated with the Good of others, so that it cannot, without its own impairing,

subsist

sublist alone, or be severed from the Good of others ; no more than a Limb can, without Suffering and Destruction, be torn from the whole ?

Is there not to all Men in some Measure, to some Men in a higher Degree, a Generosity innate, most lovely and laudable to all ; which disposeth Men, with their own pain, hazard, and detriment, to succour and relieve others in Distress, to serve the Publick, and promote the Benefit of Society ; so that inordinately to regard private Interest, doth thwart the Reason and Wisdom of Nature ?

*Nec sibi, sed toti natum se credere mundo.
—nullusque Catonis in actus
Subrepsit, partemque tulit sibi nata vo-
luptas.*

St. Paul, Rom. 9.

The Frame of our Nature indeed speaketh, That we are not born for our selves ; We shall find Man, if we contemplate him, to be a nobler Thing than to have been designed to serve himself, or to satisfy his single Pleasure ; his Endowments are too excellent, his Capacities too large for so mean and narrow Purposes. How pitiful a Creature were Man, if this were all he was made for ; how sorry a Faculty were Reason, if it served not to better Uses ! He debaseth himself, he disgraceth his Nature, who hath so low Conceits, and pursueth so petty Designs.

Nay, even a true regard to our own private Good, will engage us not inordinately to pursue Self-Interest ; it being much hugged, will be smothered and destroyed.

As we are all born Members of the World, as we are compacted into the Common-wealth, as we are incorporated into any Society, as we partake in any Conversation or Company ; so by mutual Support, Aid, Defence, Comfort, not only the common Welfare first, but our particular Benefit consequently doth sublist ; by hindring or prejudicing them, the Publick first, in Consequence our particular doth suffer : Our thriving by the common Prejudice, will in the End turn to our own Loss. As if one Member sucketh too much Nourishment to it self, and thence swelleth into an exorbitant Bulk, the whole thence incurreth Disease, so coming to perish, or languish ; whence consequently that irregular Member will fall into a participation of Ruin or Decay ; so it is in the State of human Corporations, he that in ways unnatural, or unjust (for Justice is that in human Societies, which Nature is in the rest of Things) draweth unto himself the Juice of Profit or Pleasure, so as thence to grow beyond his due size, doth thereby not only create Distempers in the publick Body, but worketh Mischief and Pain to himself ; he must not imagine to escape feeling somewhat of the Inconvenience and Misery which ariseth from Publick Convulsions and Disorders.

So doth Reason plainly enough dictate ; and Religion with clearer Evidence, and greater Advantage discovereth the same.

Its exprefs Precepts are, that we should aim to love our Neighbour as our selves, and therefore should tender his Interests as our own ; that we should not in competition with the greater Good of our Neighbour, regard our own lesser Good ; that we should not seek our own Things, but concern our selves in the Good of others ; that we should not consult our own Ease and Pleasure, but should contentedly bear the Burthens of our Brethren : *Look not every Man to his own things, but every Man also to the things of others ; Let no Man seek his own, but every Man another's Wealth ; Bear one anothers Burthens, and so fulfil the Law of Christ : Charity* *1 Cor. 13. 5. seeketh not its own ;* these are Apostolical Precepts and Aphorisms ; these are fundamental Rules and Maxims of our Holy Religion. •

Phil. 2. 4.

1 Cor. 10. 24.

Gal. 2. 6.

1 Cor. 13. 5.

It chargeth us industriously to employ our Pains, liberally to expend our Goods, yea, (in some Cases) willingly to expose and devote our Lives for the Benefit of our Brethren.

It recommendeth to us the Examples of those who have underwent unspeakable Pains, Losses, Disgraces, Troubles, and Inconveniences of all kinds for the furthering the Good of others ; the Examples of our Lord, and of his Apostles, who never in any Case regarded their own Interests, but spent and sacrificed themselves to the publick Welfare of Mankind.

It representeth us not only as Brethren of one Family, who should therefore kindly favour, assist, and grace one another, but as Members of one spiritual Body (Members one of another) compacted by the closest Bands of common Alliance, Affection, and Interest, whose Good much consisteth in the Good of each other, who should together rejoice, and condole with one another ; who should care for one anothers Good as for our own ; looking upon our selves to gain by the Advantage, to thrive in the Prosperity, to be refreshed with the Joy, to be graced

Rom. 12. 5.

1 Cor. 12. 25.

Rom. 12. 15.

ced with the Honour, to be endamaged by the Losses, to be afflicted with the Croffes of our Brethren ; so that *If* (as St. Paul saith) *one Member suffer, all the Members suffer with it ; if one Member be honoured, all the Members rejoice with it.* 1 Cor. 12. 26.

These which I have already handled, are the principal Kinds of vitious Self-Love ; there are farther some special Acts of kin to them, sprouting from the same Stock ; which I shall touch : Such as *Vain-glory, Arrogance, Talking of ones self, Thinking about ones self.* Of these I shall treat more briefly.

SERMON XXXI.

Of Vain-glory, Arrogance, Talking and Thinking of ones Self.

2 TIM. III. 2.

For Men shall be lovers of themselves, &c.

Of Vain-glory.

WHEN a regard to the Opinion, or the desire of the Esteem of Men is the main Principle from which their Actions do proceed, or the chief End which they propound to themselves : Instead of Conscience of Duty, Love and Reverence of God, hope of the Rewards promised, a sober regard to their true Good, this is *Vain-glory*. Such was the Vain-glory of the *Pharisees*, Matt. 6. &c. who fasted, who prayed, who gave Alms, who *did all their works that they might be seen of Men*, and from them obtain the Reward of Estimation and Applause : Matt. 23. 5. This is that which St. Paul forbiddeth ; *Let nothing be done out of strife, or vain-glory.* Phil. 2. 3.

When Men affect and delight in Praise, from mean or indifferent things ; as from secular Dignity, Power, Wealth, Strength, Beauty, Wit, Learning ; Eloquence, Wisdom or Craft : as, *There are many* (saith the *Psalmist*) *that boast themselves in the multitude of their Riches.* Nebuchadnezzar was raised with the Conceit of having built a Palace for the Glory of His Majesty. Herod was puff'd with Applause for his Oration, the *Philosophers* were vain in the Esteem procured by their Pretence to Wisdom, the *Pharisees* were elevated with the Praise accruing from external Acts of Piety (Fasting twice a Week, making long Prayers, tything Mint and Cumin ;) all which things being in themselves of little Worth, the affecting of Praise from them is manifestly frivolous and vain. Honour should be affected only from true Vertue, and really good Works.

Those who seek Glory from evil things (*who glory in their shame*) from pre- Rom. 2. 7. sumptuous Transgression of God's Law (*Hectorly* Profaneness and Debauchery) from outrageous Violence, from over-reaching Craft, or from any bad Quality, are not only Vain-glorious, but Impudent.

When Men affect Praise immoderately, not being content with that measure of good Reputation, which naturally doth arise from a vertuous and blameless Life.

As all other Goods, so this should be affected moderately.

It is not worth Industry, or a direct Aim.

When they are unwilling to part with the Esteem of Men, upon any Accompt, but rather will desert their Duty, than endure Disgrace ; prizing the Opinion of Men before the Favour and Approbation of God : As it is said of those *Rulers*, who *believed in our Lord, but because of the Pharisees did not confess him, that they might not be put out of the Synagogue, for they loved the glory of Men, rather than the glory* Joh. 12. 43.

Joh. 5. 44. *glory that is of God. And those to whom our Saviour said; How can ye believe, who receive glory from one another, but do not seek the glory that is of God?*

When they pursue it irregularly, are cunning and politick to procure it; hunt for it in oblique ways, lay Gins, Traps, and Baits for it; such are Ostentation of things commendable, fair Speeches, kind Looks and Gestures, devoid of Sincerity, &c. such ways ambitious and popular Men do use.

Τὸ εὐτελὲς
τὸ τοῦ δοξάζου
ἐκ δόξης.
Naz. Ep. 63.

This Practice is upon many Accompts vain and culpable, and it produceth great Inconvenience.

1. It is vain, because unprofitable. Is it not a foolish thing for a Man to affect that which little concerneth him to have, which having he is not considerably benefited? Such manifestly is the good Opinion of Men; how doth that reach us; do we feel the Commotions of their Fancy; doth their Breath blow us any good?

Qui dedit hoc
hodie, cras au-
ferat idem.

2. It is vain, because uncertain. How easily are the Judgments of Men alter'd? How fickle are their Conceits? The Wind of Heaven is not more fleeting and variable than the Wind of popular Air. In a trice the Case is turned with them; they admire and scorn, they approve and condemn, they applaud and reproach, they court and persecute the same Person, as their Fancy is casually moved, or as Fortune doth favour a Person. Histories are full of Instances of Persons, who have been now the Favourites of the People, presently the Objects of their Hatred and Obloquy.

—Stultus ho-
nores
Sæpe dat in-
dignis.

3. It is vain, because unsatisfactory. How can a Man be satisfied with the Opinion of bad Judges; who esteem a Man without good grounds, commonly for things not deserving regard; who cannot discern those things which really deserve esteem, good Principles, and honest Intention? These only God can know, these only wise and good Men can well guess at: It is therefore vain much to prize any Judgment but that of God, and of wise Men, which are but few. *Praise becometh not the Mouth of a Fool.*

Falsus honor
juvat, &c.
Quem nisi
mendosum?

How also can a Man rationally be pleased with the Commendation of others, who is sensible of his so great Defects, and conscious to himself of so many Mis-carriages? Which considering he should be ashamed to receive, he should in himself blush to own any Praise.

4. It is vain, because fond. It is ugly and unseemly to Men; they despise nothing more than acting out of this Principle. It misbecometh a Man to perform things for so pitiful a Reward, or to look upon it as a valuable Recompence for his Performances; there being Considerations so vastly greater to induce and encourage him; the Satisfaction of Conscience, the pleasing God, and procuring his Favour; the obtaining eternal Happiness.

Phil. 2. 13.

5. It is vain, because unjust. If we seek Glory to our selves, we wrong God thereby, to whom the Glory thereof is due. If there be in us any natural Endowment considerable (Strength, Beauty, Wit) it is from God, the Author of our Being and Life. Is there any supervenient or acquiste Perfection (as Skill, Knowledge, Wisdom) it is from God, who gave us the Means and Opportunities of getting it, who guided our Proceeding, and blessed our Industry: Is there any Advantage of Fortune belonging to us (as Dignity, Power, Wealth,) it is the Gift of God, who dispenseth these Things, who disposeth all Things by his Providence: Is there any vertuous Disposition in us, or any good Work performed by us; it is the Production of God, *who worketh in us to will, and to do according to his good Pleasure*: Have we any Good that we can call our own; that we have independently and absolutely made, or purchased to our selves; if not any, why do we assume to our selves the Glory of it, as if we were its Makers or Authors?

1 Cor. 4. 7.
John 3. 27.

'Tis St. Paul's Expostulation; *Who made thee to differ? What hast thou, which thou didst not receive? And if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?*

Acts 12. 23.

This is that which maketh this Vice so odious to God, who is sensible of the Injury done him, in robbing him of his due Honour: How sensible he is, he shewed in that great Instance of smiting Herod with a miraculous Vengeance; because he did not give the glory to God, but arrogated Glory to himself, receiving with Complacence the profane Flatteries of the People. He hath said, *I will not give my Glory to another.*

6. It is vain, because mischievous. It corrupteth our Mind with a leud Pleasure, which choaketh the purer Pleasures of a good Conscience, spiritual Joy and Peace.

It incenseth God's Displeasure, who cannot endure to see us act out of so mean and base a Principle.

It depriveth us of the Reward due to good Works, performed out of pure Conscience, and other genuine Principles of *Piety*. Ἀπέχου τὸν μισθόν *They have* Matt. 6. 1. *their Reward.*

7. It is vain, because unbeseeming us.

It is observable, that the Word ^{ללן} signifies to praise or applaud, and also to infatuate or make mad.

Glory doth sit unhandsomely upon us, who are so weak and frail, who are so impure and sinful, who are so liable to reproach and blame : 'Tis like Purple on a Beggar—a *Panegyrick* upon a Fly. When all is said that can be well of us, we are ridiculous, because a thousand times more might be said to our Disparagement and Disgrace. For one good Quality, we have many bad ; for one good Deed, we have done numberless Evil. The best Things we have or do, yield greater Matter of Dispraise than Commendation, being full of Imperfection and Blemish. Job 12. 17.
Isa. 44. 25.
Ecclef. 7. 8.
2. 2.

Absolutely so ; comparatively much more ; what are we in comparison to God ; whose Excellency if we consider, and our Distance from his Perfections, how can we admit Commendation ? How can we take any share of that which is wholly his due ?

If we consider even the blessed Angels and Saints, and how far short we come of them ; what can we say, but praise them who are so worthy, and abhor our selves who are so vile ?

Seeing there are such Objects of Praise, how can it be conferred on a mortal, vile, wretched Creature ?

Of Arrogance.

When a Man (puffed up with Conceit of his own Abilities, or unmeasurably affecting himself) doth assume to himself that which doth not belong to him ; more than in Reason and Justice is his due, in any kind, more Honour, more Power, more Wisdom, &c.

When he encroacheth on the Rights, invadeth the Liberties, intrudeth into the Offices, intermedleth with the Businesses, imposeth on the Judgments of others. When he will be advising, teaching, guiding, checking, controlling others without their leave or liking.

When he will unduly be exercising Judgment and Censure upon the Persons, Qualities, and Actions of his Neighbour.

These are Instances and Arguments of vitious Self-Love. He that doth rightly understand, and duly affect himself, will contain himself within his own Bounds, will mind his own Affairs, will suffer every Man undisturbedly to use his own right and liberty in judging and acting.

The Effects of this Practice are ; Dissentions, Dissatisfactions, Grudges, &c. for Men cannot endure such fond and unjust Usurpations upon their Rights, their Liberties, their Reputations.

Of Talking of ones self.

Περὶ αὐτολογίη, *Talking about ones self*, is an Effect and manifest Sign of immoderate Self-Love.

It may seem a very slender and particular Matter, but is of great use to be considered and corrected.

To talk much of ones self ; of his own Qualities, of his Concernments, of his Actions ; so as either down-rightly to commend ones self, or obliquely to insinuate grounds of Commendation ; to catch at Praise ; or however to drive on our own Designs and Interests thereby.

'Tis an Argument of Self-Love ; proceeding from a fulness of Thought concerning ones self ; and a fond Affection to ones own things, *Out of the abundance of the Heart the Mouth speaketh* ; assuredly we think much of that, and we like

it greatly, concerning which we are prompt to discourse : The Imaginations and Affections discharge themselves at the Mouth.

This is a foolish and hurtful Practice. For,

1. It is vain, and hath no Effect. We thereby seek to recommend our selves to the Opinion of Men ; but we fail therein ; for our Words gain no Belief. For no Man is looked upon as a good Judge, or a faithful Witness in his own Case ; A good Judge, and a faithful Witness must be indifferent, and disinterested ; but every Man is esteemed to be favourable, to be partial in his Opinion concerning himself ; to be apt to strain a Point of Truth and Right in passing Testimony or Sentence upon himself : He therefore that speaketh of himself is not believed, his Words have no good effect on the Hearers : It is true what the *Wiseman* observeth :

Prov. 20. 6.

2 Cor. 12. 1.

Most Men will proclaim every one his own Goodness, but a faithful Man who can find? (but it is hard to find one, who in making Report, or passing Judgment concerning himself will be faithful and just.) Καυχᾶσθαι ἑὸν συμφέρει μοι.

2. Yea it usually hath a contrary Effect, and destroyeth that which it aimeth at. Self-commendation is so far from procuring a good Opinion, that it breedeth an evil one.

Men have a Prejudice against what is said, as proceeding from a suspected Witness ; one who is byassed by Self-Love, and bribed by Self-Interest to impose upon them. *Not he that commendeth himself is approved.*

2 Cor. 10. 18.

2 Cor. 10. 13.

ἐχὶ τὰ ἄμα-
τα καυχῆ-
σόμεθα.

It is fastidious, as impertinent, insignificant, and insipid ; spending time, and beating their Ears to no purpose ; they take it for an Injury to suppose them so weak as to be moved by such Words, or forced into a good Conceit.

It is odious and invidious : For all Men do love themselves, no less than we our selves : And cannot endure to see those who affect to advance themselves, and reign in our Opinion.

It prompteth them to speak Evil of us ; to search for Faults to cool and check us.

It is therefore a preposterous and vain way to think of gaining Credit and Love : Men thereby infallibly lose or depress themselves.

Of all Words, those which express our selves, and our Things ; *I*, and *mine*, &c. are the least pleasing to Mens Ears.

It spoileth Conversation : For he that loveth to speak of himself, doth least love to hear others speak of themselves ; and so is not attentive.

If a Man have worthy Qualities, and do good Deeds ; let them speak for him ; they will of themselves extort Commendation ; his Silence about them, his seeming to neglect them will enhance their Worth in the Opinion of Men. Prating about them, obtruding them upon Men will mar their Credit ; inducing Men to think them done not out of Love to Vertue, but for a vain-glorious Design. Thus did *Cicero*, thus have many others blasted the Glory of their vertuous Deeds.

τὴν ὁδοῦ ἡμῶν

καυχώμεθα.

2 Cor. 12. 11.

2 Cor. 11. 17.

3. Supposing you get the Belief, and the Praise you aim at, to have Complacency therein is bad, or dangerous ; 'tis a fond Satisfaction, 'tis a vitious Pleasure ; it puffeth up, it befooleth.

4. It is against Modesty. It argueth the Man hath a high Opinion of himself ; If he believe himself what he saith, he hath so ; if not, why would he persuade others to have it ?

Modesty cannot without Pain hear others speak of him ; nor can with any Grace receive Commendations ; it is therefore great Impudence to speak of himself, and to seek Praise.

5. We may observe it to be a great Temptation to speak falsely. Men, when they affect Commendation, will gladly have it to the utmost ; are loth to wrong themselves, or to lose any thing ; they will therefore at least speak to the extreme Bounds of what may be said in their own Behalf ; and while they run upon the extreme Borders of Truth, it is hard to stop their Carrier, so as not to launch forth into Falshood : 'Tis hard to stand upon the Brink, without falling into the Ditch.

It is therefore adviseable in our Discourse to leave our selves out as much as may be ; never, if we can help it, to say, *I*, *mine*, &c. never seeking, commonly shunning, and declining Occasion to speak of our selves : It will bring much Convenience and Benefit to us.

Our Discourse will not be offensive ; we shall decline Envy, and Obloquy ; we shall avoid being talked of ; we shall escape Temptations of Vanity ; we shall better attend to what others say, &c.

If we will be speaking of our selves, it is allowable to speak sincerely and unaf-
fectedly concerning our Infirmities and Faults ; as St. Paul does of himself.

2 Cor. 12. 5.

There are some Cases wherein a Man may commend himself ; as in his own Defence ; to maintain his Authority ; to urge his Example, &c. so doth St. Paul often. He calleth it Folly to Boast (because generally such it is) yet he doth it for those Ends.

Plut. 11. 30. *εαυτὸν ἐπαί-
νει.*

Let another praise thee, and not thine own Mouth, a Stranger, and not thine own Lips. Prov. 27. 6.

Thinking of our selves.

Thinking of our selves, with Glee and Pleasure ; this is a great Nourisher of immoderate Self-Love, for the more they indulge to a gazing upon themselves with Delight, the more they grow in Love, the more passionately they come to dote on themselves.

It is good to reflect inward, and to view our Souls ; but we should do it so, as to find a wholesome Displeasure and Regret in beholding our selves so foul and impure, so weak and defectuous, so ugly and deformed ; if we do thus, we shall not over-love our selves.

Some general Remedies of Self-Love.

1. To reflect upon our selves seriously and impartially, considering our natural Nothingness, Meanness, Baseness, Imperfection, Infirmary, Unworthiness : The meanness and imperfection of our Nature, the defects and deformities of our Souls, the failings and misdemeanors of our Lives. He that doth this cannot surely find himself lovely ; and must therefore take it for very absurd to dote on himself. He will rather be induced to dislike, despise, abhor and loath himself.

2. To consider the loveliness of other Beings superiour to us ; comparing them with our selves, and observing how very far in Excellency, Worth, and Beauty they transcend us ; which if we do, we must appear no fit Objects of Love, we must be check'd in our Dotage, and diverted from this fond Affection to our selves. It cannot but dazzle our Eyes, and dull our Affections to our selves.

If we view the Qualities and Examples of other Men, who in Worth, in Wisdom, in Vertue, and Piety do far excell us ; their noble Endowments, their heroic Achievements ; what they have done and suffered in Obedience to God (their strict Temperance and Austerity, their laborious Industry, their Self-denial, their Patience, &c.) how can we but in Comparifon despise and loath our selves ?

• If we consider the blessed Angels and Saints, in Glory and Bliss ; their Purity, their Humility, their Obedience, how can we think of our selves without Contempt and Abhorrence ?

Especially if we contemplate the Perfection, the Purity, the Majesty of God, how must this infinitely debase us in our Opinion concerning our selves, and consequently diminish our fond Affection towards Things so vile and unworthy ?

3. To study the Acquisition and Improvement of Charity toward God and our Neighbour. This will employ and transfer our Affections ; these drawing our Souls outward, and settling them upon other Objects will abolish or abate the per-
verse Love toward our selves.

4. To consider, that we do owe all we are and have to the free Bounty and Grace of God ; hence we shall see that nothing of Esteem or Affection is due to our selves ; but all to him, who is the Fountain and Authour of all our Good.

5. To direct our Minds wholly toward those Things which rational Self-Love requireth us to regard and seek : To concern our selves in getting Vertue, in performing our Duty, in promoting our Salvation, and arriving to Happiness : This will divert us from Vanity : A sober Self-Love will stifle the other fond Self-Love.

SERMON XXXII.

Provide things honest in the sight of
all M E N.

R O M. XII. 17.

Provide things honest in the sight of all Men.

Isa. 3. 9.

THE World apparently is come to that pass, that Men commonly are afraid or asham'd of Religious Practice, hardly daring to own their Maker, by a conscientious Observance of his Laws. While Profaneness and Wickedness are grown outrageously bold, so that many *declare their sin as Sodom*; Piety and Vertue are become pitifully bashful; so that how few have the Heart and the Face openly to maintain a due Regard to them; Men in nothing appear so reserved and shy, as in avowing their Conscience, in discovering a sense of their Duty, in expressing any fear of God, any love of Goodness, any concern for their own Soul. 'Tis Wisdom, as they conceive, to compound with God, and to collude with the World; reserving for God some Place in their Heart, or yielding *unto* him some private Acknowledgment; while in their publick Demeanor they conform to the World, in commission of Sin, or neglect of their Duty; supposing, that God may be satisfied with the invisible Part of his Service; while Men are gratified by visible Compliance with their ungracious Humours.

Such Proceeding is built on divers very fallacious, absurd, and inconsistent Grounds or Pretences; whereby Men egregiously do abuse themselves, and would impose on others; namely, these, and the like:

They would not by a fair shew and semblance of Piety give cause to be taken for Hypocrites; whereas by dissembling their Conscience, and seeming to *have no fear of God before their Eyes*, they incur an Hypocrisie, no less criminal in Nature, but far more dangerous in Consequence, than is that which they pretend to decline.

They would not be apprehended Vain-glorious for affecting to serve God in the View of Men; whereas often at the Bottom of their Demeanour a most wretched and worse than *Pharisaical* Vain-glory doth lie; They forbearing the Performance of their Duty merely to shun the Censure, or to gain the Respect of the vilest and vaineest Persons.

They would be deemed exceeding honest and sincere, because forsooth, all their Piety is cordial, pure, and void of sinister Regards to popular Esteem; whereas partial Integrity is gross Nonsense; whereas no pretence can be more vain, than that we hold a faithful Friendship, or hearty Respect for God, whom we openly disclaim, or disregard; whereas also it is easily discernible, that although their Piety is not, yet their Impiety is popular, and affected to ingratiate with Men.

They would be taken for Men of brave, courageous, and masculine Spirits, exalted above the Weaknesses of Superstition and Scrupulosity; whereas indeed out of the basest Cowardise, and a dread to offend sorry People, they have not a Heart to act according to their Duty, their Judgment, their best Interest.

Isa. 65. 3.
Jer. 6. 17.
8. 12.

They would seem very modest in concealing their Vertue; while yet they are most impudent in disclosing their want of Conscience; while they are so presumptuous toward God, as to *provoke him to his face* by their Disobedience; while they are not ashamed to wrong and scandalize their Brethren by their ill Behaviour.

They

They would not be uncivil or discourteous in thwarting the Mind and Pleasure of their Company; as if in the mean time they might be most rude toward God in affronting his Will and Authority; as if any Rule of Civility could oblige a Man to forfeit his Salvation; as if it were not rather most cruel Discourtesie, and barbarous Inhumanity to countenance or encourage any Man in Courses tending to his Ruin.

They would not be singular and uncouth in discomfiting from the common Road, or Fashion of Men; as if it were better to leave the common Duty, than the common Faults of Men; as if Wisdom and Vertue were ever the most vulgar Things; as if the Way to Heaven were the broadest and the most beaten Way; as if Rarity should abate the Price of good Things; as if Conspiracy in Rebellion against God might justify or excuse the Fact; as if it were adviseable to march to Hell in a Troop, or comfortable to lie there for ever among the damned Crew of Associates in Wickedness.

They cannot endure to be accounted Zealots or Bigots in Religion; As if a Man could love or fear God too much; or be over-faithful and careful in serving him; as if to be most earnest and solicitous (not in promoting our own Fancies, but) in discharging our plain Duties, could be justly reproachable; or were not indeed highly commendable.

These things I may hereafter fully declare; in the mean time it is manifest that such a Practice is extremely prejudicial to Religion and Goodness; so that it may be very useful to employ our Meditations upon this Text of the Apostle, which directly doth oppose and prohibit it.

The same Text he otherwhere (in his Second Epistle to the Corinthians) doth repeat, in the same Terms (only inserting a Clause more fully explaining his Sense) backing his Precept with his own Example; for, We (saith he there) did so manage the Business of collecting and dispensing Alms, as to avoid that any Man should blame us in this abundance, which is administered by us; providing for honest things, not only in the sight of the Lord, but in the sight of Men. ^{2 Cor. 8. 21.}

The Words do imply a Precept of very large Extent, and touching a great Part of our Duty; even all thereof which is publick and visible; for which we are accomprable to the World, whereof Man can take any cognisance; which concerneth all our Speech and Conversation, all our Dealing and Commerce, all our Deportment relating to human Society, civil or spiritual.

I shall first a little consider its meaning and design; then I shall propose Reasons and Inducements to its observance; then I shall declare the Folly of those Principles and Pretences which obstruct that observance.

I. The Meaning of it is, that we should have a special Care of our external Demeanour and Conversation, which cometh under the View and Observation of Men; that it be exempted from any Offence or Blame, yea, that it be comely and commendable. ^{Ἀμεμπτοί. Phil. 2. 15. Ἀνεκλῆστοί. Col. 1. 22.}

The Terms, in which it is expressed, are notably emphatical: We are directed *προνοεῖν*, to provide, to use a Providence and Forecast in the Case: E'er we undertake any Design, we should deliberate with our selves, and consider on what Theatre we shall act, what Persons will be Spectators, what Conceits our Practice may raise in them, and what Influence probably it will have on them. We should not rush in into the publick View, with a precipitant Rashness, or blind Negligence, or contemptuous Disregard, not caring who standeth in our way, who marketh what we do, what Consequence our Proceeding may have on the Score of its being publick and visible: We should advise before-hand, lay our Business, and on set Purpose order our Behaviour with a regard to those, to whose Sight and Notice we expose it; foreseeing how our Actions may affect or incline them. So we must provide; what Things? καλὰ, Things fair and handsome; Things not only good, innocent, and inoffensive to the Sight of Men; but goodly, pleasant, and acceptable to well disposed Beholders; such as our Apostle doth otherwhere recommend, when he chargeth us to regard, ὅσα σεμνὰ, whatever things are venerable, ὅσα εὐσχημὰ, whatever things are lovely, ὅσα εὐφροσύνη, whatever things are of good report, ἢ τίς ἐπαινέσθαι—whatever things are laudable. And when he doth exhort us to walk εὐχημῶς, handsomly and decently, in a comely Garb and Fashion of

Rom. 13. 13.
Life: 1 Thess. 4. 12.

Life : This may add an Obligation to some Things not directly prescribed by God, which yet may serve to adorn Religion ; but it cannot detract any thing from what God hath commanded : It doth comprehend all Instances of Piety and Vertue, practicable before Men ; it certainly doth exclude all Commission of Sin, and Omission of Duty, for that nothing can be fair or handsome, which is ugly in God's Sight, which doth not suit to his Holy Will.

Such things we must provide, *ἑνώπιον πάντων ἀνθρώπων*, before all Men ; not only before some Men, to whom we bear a particular respect, of whom we stand in awe, upon whom we have a design ; but universally before all Men ; as having a due Consideration of all those, upon whom our Deportment may have influence ; not despising or disregarding the Observation of the meanest or most inconsiderable Person whatever.

But in this Practice, to avoid Misapprehensions, we must distinguish ; for it is not required, that we should do all Things openly, nor intended that we should do any thing vainly ; but that we should act constantly according to the Nature and Reason of things, with upright and pure Intention : The *Apostle* doth not mean, that in our Practice we should resemble the *Pharisees*, whom our Lord reproveth Matt. 6. 1, 5. for doing their Alms before Men, for loving to pray standing in the Synagogues, for doing Matt. 23. 5. all their Works to be seen of Men ; performing those Acts of Piety openly in the Corners of the Street, which should have been done secretly in the Closet ; and to doing them out of Vanity, and ambitious Design, to procure the good Opinion and Praise of Men : He doth not intend, that we should assume a formal Garb of singular Vertue ; that we should aim to seem better than we are, counterfeiting any Point of Religion, or Vertue ; that we should affect to appear even as good as Matt. 6. 2. we are, exposing all our Piety to common View : That we should sound a Trumpet before us, making an Ostentation of any good Deeds, catching at Reputation, or Applause for them ; that we should do any commendable thing chiefly to obtain the good Opinion of the World, or to escape its Censure ; infinitely far it was Matt. 23. 27. from the *Apostle's* Intention, that we should be like those whited Sepulchres, which appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead mens bones and all Uncleanness : that is, like those *Pharisees*, who did outwardly appear righteous, but within were full of Hypocrisy and Iniquity : No ;

In some Cases we must be reserved, and keep our Vertue close to our selves ; and ever under a fair Shew there must be a real Substance of Good, together with an honest Intention of Heart ; a good Conscience must always lie at the Bottom of a good Conversation ; the outside must be good, but the best side must be inward ; we must endeavour to sanctifie our Life and Conversation, but we must especially labour to purifie our Hearts and Affections.

Join the Precept with others duly limiting it, and it doth import, that with pure Sincerity, and unaffected Simplicity (void of any sinister, or sordid Design) we should in all Places, upon all Occasions, in all Matters carefully discharge that Part of our Duty which is publick, according to its Nature, Season, and Extency, that is publickly ; not abstaining from the Practice of those good Deeds, which cannot otherwise than openly be well performed ; or the conspicuous performance whereof is absolutely needful in regard to God's Law and the Satisfaction of our Conscience, is plainly serviceable to the Glory of God, is very conducive to the Edification of our Neighbour, or which may be useful to good Purposes concurrent with those principal Ends : We should, as good Trees, from a deep Matt. 7. 17. root of true Piety, in due season, naturally as it were shoot forth good Fruits, not Luke 6. 44. only pleasant to the sight, but savoury to the taste, and wholesome for use, as Psal. 1. 3. St. Paul, who, as he saith of himself, that he did provide things honest in the sight of all men, so he also doth affirm, that his Rejoicing was this, the Testimony of his Conscience, that in Simplicity and godly Sincerity—he had his Conversation in the World.

There are indeed some Duties, or Works of Piety and Vertue, the Nature whereof directeth, that in the Practice of them we should be reserved ; such as those wherein the World is not immediately concerned, and which may with best Advantage be transacted between God and our own Souls ; as private Devotion, Meditation on God's Word and Will, the Discussion of our Consciences, voluntary Exercises of Penitence, and the like ; such also be those, wherein the Intervention or Notice of few Persons is required ; as Deeds of particular Charity in

Τὸ σεμνὸν ἀ-
πλᾶσως—
Τὸ εὐφρῖμον
ἀποφρητί.
Ant. 1. §. 9.
2. §. 5.

in dispensing Alms, good Advice, friendly Reproof; the which sort of Duties our Lord hath taught us to perform *in secret*, or as closely as we may; studiously keeping our Observance of them from the Eyes of Men; thereby assuring our Sincerity to our selves, and guarding our Practice from any Taint of Vanity, or Suspicion of Hypocrisy; as also in some Cases avoiding to cause Prejudice or Offence to our Neighbours: *Take heed* (saith our Lord) *that ye do not your Alms before Men*; and *Thou when thou prayest, enter into thy Closet*; and *Thou when thou fastest, anoint thine Head, and wash thy Face, that thou appear not unto Men to fast*; and, *If thy Brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his Fault between thee and him alone*. Ev τῷ κρυ-
πτῷ.
Matt. 6. 4.
Matt. 6. 1.
Matt. 6. 6.
Matt. 6. 17.
Matt. 18. 15.

But there are divers other Duties, the Discharge whereof necessarily is notorious and visible; the Publick being the Stage on which they are to be acted; the transaction of them demanding the Entercourse of many Persons, who are the Objects or Instruments of them, or are somewise concerned in them: Such is that negative Duty, of a general Nature, and vast Comprehension, which we may call Innocence: that is a total abstinence from Sin, or forbearance to transgress any divine Command; which is a Part of Job's Character, *That Man was perfect and upright, one that feared God, and eschewed Evil*; the which Duty being to be practised at all Times in every Place, cannot avoid being observable. Psal. 34. 14.
Job 1. 1, 2, 3.

Such are also divers positive Duties; for such is the Profession of our Faith in God, and Acknowledgment of his heavenly Truth, revealed in the Gospel of our blessed Saviour; which is stiled *confessing our Lord before Men*, and is (as St. Paul telleth us) indispensibly requisite to Salvation. Rom. 10. 10.

Such is joining in that publick Adoration, whereby the Honour and Authority of God are upheld in the World, with seemly Expressions of Reverence; the which is to be performed solemnly, and (as the Holy Psalmist speaketh) *in the midst of the Congregation*. Psa. 99. 5.
132. 7.
Psal. 22. 22.

Such is the Zeal in Vindication of God's Honour, when Occasion requireth, from blasphemous Aspersions, or from scandalous Offences against it.

Such are Justice, Equity, Fidelity, and Ingenuity in our Dealings; Meekness, Gentleness, Patience, Kindness, and Courtesie in our Converse; Peaceableness in our Carriage, and charitable Beneficence; the Objects whereof are most general, according to those Apostolical Precepts, *That our Moderation* (or our Equity and Ingenuity) *be known unto all Men*; that we *show all Meekness to all Men*; that we *must not strive*; but *be gentle unto all Men*; that we *be patient toward all Men*; that we *pursue Peace with all Men*; that *As we have opportunity we should do good unto all Men*; should *abound in Love one towards another, and towards all Men*; should *ever follow that which is good both among our selves, and to all Men*; should *liberally distribute to the Saints, and to all Men*; in performing which so general Duties, how can a Man pass *incognito*, how can he so deal with all Men indiscernibly? Phil. 4. 5.
Tit. 3. 2.
2 Tim. 2. 24.
1 Thess. 5. 14.
Heb. 12. 14.
Rom. 12. 18.
Gal. 6. 10.
1 Thess. 3. 12.
1 Thess. 5. 15.
2 Cor. 9. 13.

Such are likewise Gravity and Modesty in our Behaviour; Sweetness, Soberness, Aptness to profit and edifie the Hearers in our Discourse; Moderation and Temperance in our corporeal Enjoyments: Industry in our Business and the Works of our Calling, Integrity in the Management of any Office or Trust committed to us; a constant Practice of which Vertues is not only enjoined to us as our particular Duty, but for publick Example. 2 Tim. 4. 12.
Tit. 2. 4, 7.

Such are seasonable Defence of the Truth, and Opposing of Error; the Commendation of Vertue, and Reprehension of notorious Sin, with the like.

Such Things must be practised, because indispensable Duties; but they cannot be done out of Sight, or barring the Observation of Men; they do involve Publickness; they carry a Light and Lustre with them, attracting all Eyes to regard them; it is as impossible to conceal them as to hide the Sun from all the World; or to conceal a City that is set upon a Hill; for nothing (as St. Chrysostom saith) *doth render a Man so illustrious, although he ten thousand times would be hid, as an open practice of Vertue*. Matt. 5. 14.

Wherefore the Works of Mercy (saith St. Austin) the Affection of Charity, the Sanctity of Godliness, the Incorruptness of Chastity, the Moderation of Sobriety, these are perpetually to be held, whether we are in the publick, or at home; whether before Men, or in the Closet, whether we speak, or keep silence.

In the Practice of them, 'tis true, we mainly should re-

Οὐδὲν ὅς τις ἐπίσημον ἄνδρα ποιεῖ, καὶ μεγαλύνει λατρεύειν βέλαι, ὥς ὁ πρὸς τοὺς ἐπιδεικνύς. Chrys. in Matt. 5. 16.

Opera misericordiae, affectus charitatis, sanctitas pietatis, incorruptio castitatis, modestia sobrietatis, semper haec tenenda sunt; sive cum in publico sumus, sive cum in domo; sive ante homines, sive in cubiculo; sive loquentes, sive tacentes, Aug. in Ep. 1. Joh. Tract. 8.

spect

— non cum fama sed cum rerum natura deliberandum est. Sen. Ep. 81.

1 Cor. 4. 3. 1 Thess. 2. 4, 5.
Gal. 1. 10.

Si times spectatores non habebis imitatores; debes ergo videri, sed non ad hoc debes facere ut videaris, non ibi debes esse finis gaudii tui, non ibi terminus lætitiæ tuæ, ut putes te totum fructum consecutum esse boni operis, cum visus fueris atque laudatus. Ibid.

Eph. 6. 6.

Col. 3. 23, 24.

the Will of God from the Heart; doing it heartily as to the Lord, and not unto Men, knowing that of the Lord we shall receive the reward of the Inheritance.

Yet nothing in the mean time should hinder us from performing such necessary Duties, strictly and exactly, with our most diligent Care and Endeavour, even in that Light, which their Nature doth carry in it.

How much soever of our Vertue or Piety out of Humility, or Modesty we may conceal; yet we must be careful of discovering any Vice or Irreligion; either by notoriously committing any thing forbidden by God, or omitting any thing commanded by him.

This we should not do upon any Terms, upon any Pretence whatever; No wicked Fashion should engage us, no bad Example should inveigle us, no Favour of Men should allure us, no Terror should scare us thereto; we should not out of Fear, out of Shame, out of Complaisance, out of affected Prudence, or politick Design; out of Deference to the Quality, Dignity, or Authority of any Person; out of regard to any Man's Desire, or Pleasure; We should not, to decline Offence, Envy, Blame, Reproach, Ill-treatment, or upon any such Accompt, comply in any sinful Practice, wave any Duty, neglect any Season of performing a good Deed, whereby we may glorifie God, or edifie our Neighbour, or promote the Welfare of our own Soul.

To such a Practice, according to the intent of St. Paul's Injunction, we are obliged; and thereto we may be induced by divers Considerations; particularly by those which we shall now propose.

Bona conscientia prodire vult & conspicui, ipsas nequitia tenebras timet. Sen. Ep. 27.

1. We may consider, that the Publick is the proper, natural, and due Place of Goodness: It should dwell in the Light, it should walk freely and boldly every where, it should expose it self to open View, that it may receive from rational Creatures its due Approbation, Respect and Praise; it by publickness is advanced, and the more it doth appear, the more beautiful, the more pleasant, the more useful it is; yielding the fairer Lustre, the greater Influence, the better Effects; thereby diffusing and propagating it self, becoming exemplary, instructive and admonitive; drawing Lovers and Admirers to it; exciting and encouraging Men to embrace it; wherefore it is very absurd that it should sculk or sneak; it is a great Damage to the Publick, that it should retire from common notice.

Omne malum aut timore, aut pudore natura perfudit. Tert. Apol. cap. 1. Job 24. 13—17.

On the other hand, it is proper for Wickedness never to appear, or to shew its Head in view; it should be confined to darkness and Solitude, under guard of its natural Keepers, Shame and Fear; it should be exterminated from all Conversation among rational Creatures, and banished to the infernal Shades: Publickness doth augment and aggravate it; the more it is seen, the more ugly, the more loathsome, the more noxious it is; its odious Shape being disclosed, its noisome Steams being dispersed, its pestilent Effects being conveyed thereby.

Rom. 13. 12.
Eph. 5. 11.

John 3. 21.
Eph. 5. 13.

Wherefore to smother Vertue (that fair Child of Light) in privacy, and to vent Sin (the works of darkness) openly, is quite to transplace things out of their natural Situation and Order; according to which we are taught by our Lord, that *He that doth truth cometh to the Light, that his Deeds may be manifest*; and by St. Paul, that *Every one, who doth evil, hateth the light, neither cometh he to the light, lest his Deeds should be reproved*; So indeed it is, and will be, where Conscience retaineth its due Sway and Force; where a due Respect and Reverence are preserved for Goodness.

As that any Good cometh from Detection of Sin, is an accidental Advantage; so that any Mischief doth ever follow the Manifestation of Vertue, is an unnatural

tural Abuse, the which may well be prevented: There can be no Danger of acting any good most evidently, if we do withal act sincerely, having purified our Hearts from dishonest Intention, and from ambitious Vanity; the fear of which should not wholly drive Vertue under the Hatches, and bring Vice upon the Stage. But,

2. We should consider, that we cannot really, in any competent or tolerable measure be good Men, without approving our selves such in our Conversation before Men.

Whatever may be pretended, it commonly doth happen, and it ever is to be suspected that the invisible Piety, which is not accompanied with visible Conscientiousness, is false, or is no Piety at all; or that they who have little Care and Conscience to serve God publickly, have much less to serve him privately; or that such as betray a scandalous Negligence of their Ways, will hardly maintain a careful Watch over their Hearts; for the same Causes (be it profane Infidelity, or looseness of Principles, or supine Incogitancy, or Sloth, or Stupidity) which dispose them to disregard God and his Laws before the World, more effectually will incline them to neglect God, and forget their Duty by themselves, where beside their own Conscience, there is no Witness, no Judge, no Censor to encourage, or reproach them: But admit it possible, and put Case, that sometimes the Heart and Conversation may not run parallel; that a Man may better govern his interiour Thoughts and Affections, than he doth manage his exteriour Behaviour and Actions, that a Man secretly may cleave to God, although he seemeth openly to desert him; yet this will not suffice to constitute, or denominate a good Man; because much of Goodness, as we have shewed, even the nobler half thereof (that Part whereby God is most glorified, and whereby the World is most benefitted) doth lie in open and visible Practice; that Vertue therefore must be very imperfect, that Obedience must be very lame, which is deficient in so great a Part. Jam. 2. 10.

As there can be no fair pretence to Goodness, where so little thereof is conspicuous; so there can be no real Integrity thereof, where so much of Duty is wanting.

Our Lord hath taught us, that *Every Tree is known by its Fruit*; and St. James Luke 6. 44. faith, that *Faith is shewed by Works*; and so it is, that a Man can hardly be good Jam. 2. 18. in any reasonable Degree without appearing such; Impiety may, but Piety cannot be quite concealed: As Gold may be counterfeited (for all is not Gold that glittereth) yet true Gold always doth look like Gold; so although bad Men sometimes may seem good, yet good Men also must seem such, appearing in their own native Temper and Lustre.

Goodness cannot be disguised in the Shape of Evil, because Simplicity and Innocence are essential Ingredients of it; any mixture of notorious Sin, any visible neglect of Duty assuring (yea formerly making) a want of it, or a real Defect therein: It may be daubed with false Aspersions, it may be dimmed by the Breath of unjust, and uncharitable Censures; but wiping them off, its natural Hue certainly will appear.

Wherefore if we would satisfy our selves in our own Consciences, or justify our selves to others, that we are truly good, we must (without Partiality, or distinguishing between publick and private) like the Holy Psalmist, have respect unto all God's Commandments; we, like Zachary and Elizabeth, must walk in all the Commandments and Ordinances of the Lord, blameless; we must, like David, accomplish God's Will; we must observe St. Paul's Rule, to abstain ἀπὸ παντός εἶδός πορνῆς, from both every kind of evil, and every bad appearance. But farther.

3. A great Care of our good Behaviour before Men is necessary in regard to Almighty God; whose just Interest is preserved, whose due Homage is payed, whose Honour is promoted thereby; the same being greatly prejudiced and impaired by the contrary Defaillance.

It is a clear Point of Justice towards God, as to render all Obedience to him, so particularly that which consisteth in an open Acknowledgment and Service of him; for as he made and doth preserve not only the Heart, but the Tongue, the Members, the whole Man, so all must concur in rendering their Tribute of Reverence and Service to him.

Rom. 12. 1.

1 Cor. 10. 31.

The *Apostle* doth prescribe, that *whatever we do, we should do all to the glory of God*; and well he might, seeing that to glorifie God is indeed to execute the main design of our Creation, to apply our Faculties to their best use, to atchieve the most proper and most excellent Work, whereof we are capable; to do that which is the worthiest and happiest Employment of Angels, which all the Company of Heaven with most ardent Desire, with most zealous Ambition, with restless Endeavour doth pursue: And this we cannot better, we cannot otherwise do, than by an apparent good Conversation. For,

He that apparently in all his Actions maketh Conscience of obeying God's Laws, thereby doth evidence his firm Persuasion concerning the Existence and Providence of God, doth adhere to him against all Adversaries of Piety, and all Temptations to Rebellion; doth avow his Sovereign Majesty and Authority; doth yield him due Veneration and Obedience; doth shew right Apprehensions of him, and just Affections towards him; implying that he doth most highly esteem him, doth most heartily love him, doth chiefly dread him, doth repose his Trust and Hope in him for all his Happiness; hath a great Opinion of his Wisdom, a great Awe of his Power, a great Sense of his Goodness; the which Practice is in it self a direct and formal Glorification of God, in his own Person.

He also thereby doth farther promote the Glory of God, instructing, exciting, and encouraging others to the like Practice of deferring Respect and Service to God; for naturally Men have such a Capacity, such Aptitude, such Proclivity to Religion (or to the Acknowledgment and Worship of their Maker) that when they behold others seriously and earnestly pursuing it, they are easily drawn to conspire therein; especially those who are not utterly perverted and corrupted by ill Custom.

³ Αρετῆς ἀσκη-
σις τίμιον μὲν
κρίμα πρὸς
χρόνι, ἡ δὲ ἰσὺν
ἡ δὲ αἰμα τοῖς
ἐπιτυγχάνουσιν.
Bas. Ep. 42.
Ὁταν δὲ ἀ-
πιστοί, &c.
Chryl. ἀνδρ.
θ. (p. 524.)

And whereas good Conversation hath a native Beauty, affecting Beholders with Delight, whereas the Fruits of Vertue have a pleasing Sweetness, grateful to all who taste them; Men from that Sight and that Sense, will presently be moved to commend the Wisdom, and to bless the Goodness of him, who was pleased to institute so excellent a Religion, to enact so beneficial Laws, to prescribe so wholesome Duties to us: For, *when* (saith the most divine Father) *an Infidel shall see thee a Believer to be ἀπαλαμμένον—staunch, sober, orderly, he will be astonish'd, and will say, in truth great is the God of Christians! What Men hath he made? What Persons, out of what Persons hath he made them? How from Men hath he made them Angels? If one abuse them they do not rail; if one smite them, they do not resent; if one injure them, they pray for him that doth the Offence; they know not to remember ill Turns, they skill not to be vain, they have not learnt to lie, they cannot abide to forswear, or rather to swear at all, but sooner would chuse to have their Tongue cut out, than to let an Oath slip out of their Mouth.*

Gloria consensus multorum exigit—
Consentire in hoc plures insignes & præ-
stantes viri debent, ut claritas sit. Sen.
Ep. 102.

Gloria est consentiens laus bonorum in
corrupta voce bene judicantium de ex-
cellente virtute. Cic. 3. Tus. in.

Gloria est frequens de aliquo fama
cum laude. Cic. de Inv. 2. 39.

So may we really glorifie God; and otherwise than by open Practice we cannot do it; for Glory doth require a publick Stage; it implying (as *Seneca* saith) *the consent of many worthy Persons* declaring their Esteem; it being, as *Cicero* defineth it, *the agreeing Praise of good Men; with an incorrupted Vote, judging well of an excellent Vertue.*

Wherefore toward our being enabled to glorifie God, two Things must concur; that we be good Men, and that we be openly such.

Non est specio-
sa laus in ore
peccatoris.
Ecclus. 15. 9.

That we be good Men, because otherwise our Commendation will have no worth, or weight; for *Praise is not comely in the mouth of Sinners*: It is no Ornament to be commended by ill Men, to whose Words little regard is due, little trust can be given.

That we be good openly, avowing God in Practice conducing to his Honour: Otherwise no Glory can accrue to him from our Goodness: We may serve God, and please him in private; but we cannot by that Service glorifie him; at least at present and here in this World: It is true, the closest Piety will yield Glory to God at the last, *when our Lord shall come to be glorified in his Saints, and admired in them that believe*; but to design such a future Glorification of God is not enough; it is our Duty to glorifie God now, that we may be rewarded for it, and that he may requite us with Glory hereafter.

God himself telleth us in the *Psalm*, *Whoso offereth Praise, he glorifieth me.* And *Psalm* 50. 23. how can Praise be offered, or to what Purpose will it be offered otherwise than apparently, either in Word or Deed, by oral or by real Expression, to the Ears, or to the Eyes of Men, so as to occasion in them the Production of worthy Conceptions and due Affections toward God? In such a manner the *holy Man* did offer it, who said, *I will declare thy Name unto my Brethren, in the midst of the Congregation I will praise thee; I will praise the Lord with my whole Heart, in the Assembly of the Upright, and in the Congregation;* He did it sometimes with his Mouth, which is a notable Part of our Conversation; but we may do it continually by our Life; for, *He* (saith St. *Austin*) *who praiseth God with his Tongue, cannot do that always; but he that praiseth God by his Manners can always do it.* *Qui Deum laudat lingua, non semper potest; qui moribus Deum laudat, semper potest.* Aug. in Ep. Joh. Tr. 1.

This Motive is by the great Masters of our Christian Practice frequently urged; For

Saint *Paul* wisheth the *Philippians* to be filled with the fruits of Righteousness, which *Phil.* 1. 11. are by *Jesus Christ*, unto the praise and glory of God; He prayeth for the *Thessalonians*, that God would fulfil all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with *2 Thess.* 1. 11. power, that the name of our Lord *Jesus Christ* might be glorified in them: He particularly doth incite the *Corinthians* to Works of Charity, that by that ministration Men might be induced to glorify God, rendring him thankful Praise for their beneficial Obedience. *2 Cor.* 9. 11. 13.

St. *Peter* likewise doth exhort all Christians to have their Conversation honest among the Gentiles, that they might by their good Works, which they should behold, glorify God in the day of visitation (that is perhaps, when they carefully do view, and reflect on them.) *1 Pet.* 2. 12. *Ἐν ἡμέρᾳ ἐπισκοπῆς.*

Our Lord himself thus chargeth his Disciples, Let your Light so shine before Men, *Matt.* 5. 16. that they may see your good Works, and glorify your Father which is in Heaven; they did observe his Command, and the Effect did follow, many being converted to God no less by the radiant Integrity of their Life, than by the persuasive Efficacy of their Doctrine: And, In this (saith our Lord again) is my Father glorified, if ye bear much Fruit. What Fruit was that? What but of good Works visible to the Eye, and perceptible to the Taste; otherwise how could Men thence find Cause to glorify God?

In fine, this is declared to be the peculiar Design of our Religion, or of the whole Christian Institution; to this end we are made a chosen Generation, a royal Priesthood, a holy Nation, a peculiar People, that we should shew forth the Praises (or Vertues) of him, who hath called us out of Darkness to his marvellous Light; not only by our Profession, but in our Practice, declaring his Goodness. *1 Pet.* 2. 9.

On the other hand, by stifling our Vertue and Conscience, in an open compliance with Sin, or neglect of our Duty, we greatly shall dishonour God; for thereby in effect we deny him, and desert him; we injure his Majesty, and disclaim our Allegiance to him; we intimate our mean Opinion of him, and small Affection to him; we betray our want of Reverence to his Excellency, of Dread to his Greatness, of Love to his Goodness; of Hope in his Promises, and gracious Overtures of Mercy; of Fear in regard to his severe Justice and fierce Menaces: So immediately we dishonour him, and we thereby also do countenance Disrespect and Disobedience to him: And our Behaviour tendeth to produce, or to confirm the like irreligious Dispositions of Mind and impious Practices in others; so that with horrible Dissingenuity we cross the Design of our Creation, and violate our greatest Obligations toward our Maker. *Tit.* 1. 16.

And indeed what greater Affront, or more heinous Indignity can we offer to God, than openly before the World, by the most real Expressions of our Works, to deny and disown him; than to be notoriously ashamed, or afraid to avow him for our Lord and Master; than to express no Sense of our Duty to him, no Reverence of his Authority, no Gratitude for his Benefits to us; than visibly to prefer any other Consideration or worldly Advantage before a Regard to his Will and Pleasure. *Tit.* 1. 16.

In this open Sin doth outgo private Wickedness, and putteth down even the worst Hypocrisy (beside its own) that it not only offendeth God, but sorely woundeth his Honour, and exposeth his glorious Name to Contempt; by which Consideration such Miscarriages are frequently aggravated in Holy Scripture: So in the Prophets God complaineth of his People, for having by their scandalous Crimes profaned his holy Name among the Heathen: So St. *Paul* expostulateth with

Isa. 52. 2.
Rom. 2. 23.
2 Sam. 12. 14.

the Jew, *Thou that boastest of the Law, through breaking the Law dishonourest thou God?* So Nathan told David, that God would punish him, *because by his bad Deed he had given great occasion to the Enemies of the Lord to blaspheme.* But,

4. We should be careful of our good Behaviour in the Sight of Men, that we may thereby maintain the Dignity and Repute of our Christian Profession, which by our naughty or negligent Demeanour will be much disparaged and disgraced.

Most evident it is to Reason, that a visible Practice, conformable to the Rules of our Religion, cannot otherwise than exceedingly commend and grace it; for how can the goodness of a Rule more surely obtain its due Commendation, than from its being applied to observable Practice and Experience?

Assuredly Charity, Meekness, Humility, Patience, Sobriety, Discretion, and all Christian Vertues, as in themselves they are very amiable and venerable to all Men, as they yield great Benefit and much Pleasure to those whom their Consequences do touch; so they do ingratiate the Law which prescribeth them, they bring Esteem to the Principles, whence they are derived; *He (as the Apostle saith) that in these things serveth Christ, is both acceptable to God, and approved of Men,* as the Follower of a most excellent Rule.

Rom. 14. 18.

We may also consider, that a conspicuous Practice, according to our Religion, is a demonstrative Proof, that we do seriously and firmly embrace it, or that we are heartily and steadily persuaded of its Truth; which is no small Credit to any Profession, arguing that it hath a good Foundation in Reason, apt to bottom and sustain a solid Faith.

And as thereby we pregnantly do evidence, that we our selves do highly Value the noble Privileges, the excellent Promises, the precious Rewards exhibited in the Gospel; so we thereby do breed a like Esteem in others; upon whom the Authority of Men apparently Vertuous and Conscientious infallibly will have a forcible Influence.

Such a Practice will have a great Stroke toward evincing the Truth and Reality, the perfect Excellency, the notable Strength and Efficacy of our Religion; plainly shewing, that it is not a meer Name, an idle Pretence, a weak Fancy, a dry Speculation, a chimerical Dream; but a vigorous and masculine Principle, able to produce most worthy Fruits of substantial Goodness, *profitable to Men*; conducive to our own Welfare, and to the Benefit of others.

As gallant Actions, becoming a noble Rank, elevated above the vulgar Level, do illustrate and dignifie Nobility it self; so doth a worthy Conversation, becoming our high Station in the heavenly Kingdom, our near Alliances to God, those splendid Titles and glorious Privileges assigned to every faithful Christian in the Evangelical Charter, render our State admirable, and make it seem an excellent Advantage to be a Christian.

Tit. 2. 10.
Phil. 1. 27.
Eph. 4. 1.
Eph. 5. 3.
Rom. 16. 2.
Eph. 5. 8.
1 Thess. 2. 12.
Col. 1. 10.

Hence in the Apostolical Writings an Observance of the Evangelical Laws is so much and often enforced by this Consideration; for upon this Account we are exhorted to a careful Discharge of our Duty, that *we may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things*; We are urged to *have our Conversation worthy of the Gospel*; to *walk worthy of the Vocation, wherewith we are called*, to behave our selves *as worthily becometh Saints* (that is, Persons instituted in so Holy a Religion, and designed to so peculiar excellency in Vertue) to *walk as children of the light*, (that is, of Truth and Knowledge revealed from Heaven) to *walk worthy of God, who hath called us unto his Kingdom and Glory*; *worthy of the Lord, unto all well-pleasing, being fruitful in every good work*; the which Enforcements of Duty do imply a visible Practice, producing the visible Effects of Ornament and Credit to our Religion, recommending it to the Minds and Consciences of Men.

Contrariwise, the Defect of good Conversation before Men in Christians, is upon divers accounts disgraceful to our Religion. For,

It tempteth Men to judge, that we our selves do not heartily believe its Truth, or value its Worth; That we do not approve its Doctrine for reasonable, or take its Advantages for considerable, or deem the Name and State of a Christian to be honourable; seeing we are not concerned to own them, or do not care to engage our Reputation in avowing and abetting them in that Way, which doth

Εἰ δὲ τις ἐλεγχθῇ πρὸς τὸ τι ἀνομον, ὁ τοιοῦτος ἐμὸν εὐαγγέλιον ἐβλάψεν, ἀλλὰ ἡ βλασφημία ἐμὸν προσέτερε τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ.
Const. Ap. 2. 8.

best signifie our Mind and Meaning: For Men certainly will judge of our Sense, not so much

much by what we say, as from what we do; not by our verbal Profession or Pretence, but from our Practice, as the surest Indication of our Heart.

Wherefore when they hear us to confess our Faith, and see us Act like Infidels, they will be forced to esteem us either for subdolous Hypocrites, or for inconsistent Fools; who assume the Name of Christians, and pretend to great Advantages thence, yet in effect do not mind, or regard them; highly commending the Rules of our Religion, but not at all observing them; greatly admiring the Example of our Saviour, but not caring to imitate it; describing Heaven for a most happy Place, but not striving to get thither, in the sole Way, which our Lord prescribeth, of faithful and diligent Obedience to his Precepts.

Seeing, I say, this Repugnance between our Profession and our Practice, will induce Men to charge us with Hypocrisy and Folly; and if the Professors be taken for Counterfeits or Fools, the Profession it self will hardly 'scape from being held Imposture, or Folly.

Our Religion at least will thence be exposed to the Censures of being no better than a fond Device, and a barren Notion, unpracticable, ineffectual, and insignificant to any good Purpose.

The visible Misbehaviour, I say, of Christians, will assuredly derive Obloquy and Reproach on Christianity, if not as bad, yet as vain, impotent, impertinent, and useless; especially those who are disaffected to it, will hence take Advantage to insult upon it with contemptuous Scorn; to what, will they say, do your fine Rules serve? What effects do your glorious Hopes produce? Where are the Fruits of that holy Faith, and heavenly Doctrine, which you so extol and magnifie?

Whereas also bad Conversation commonly doth not only deprive Men of the Benefits which our Religion promiseth, but doth carry with it hurtful fruits; Men that see or feel them will be apt to impute them to Religion.

If a Christian be unjust, censorious, factious, any-wise offensive or troublesome, although Irreligion be the Cause of such things, yet Religion must bear the Blame, and they presently exclaim,

Quantum religio potuit suadere malorum!

Whence St. Paul (who was a powerful Instructor doth impress Matters of Duty by the proper Motives) doth often, and upon all Occasions urge this Consideration; He chargeth us *to give no offence in any thing, that the Ministry* (or Evangelical Dispensation) *be not blamed*, or exposed to the censure of any captious *Momus*; He biddeth us to forbear harsh Judgment, and all uncharitable Dealing, that *our good be not evil spoken of*. He presseth the Discharge of our Duty in each Calling and Relation, that by neglect thereof the Gospel be not defamed; *Let* (saith he) *as many Servants as are under the Yoke, count their own Masters worthy of all Honour, that the Name of God, and his Doctrine be not blasphemed*; and, *Let Women be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own Husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed*; and, *I will that younger Women marry, bear Children, guide the House* (so as) *to give no occasion to the Adversary* (that is, to Persons disaffected to Christianity) *to speak reproachfully* (of it :) which Discourse, by clear Parity of Reason, may be applied to any other State, or Relation.

Now seriously, what greater Mischief can we do, what heavier Guilt may we contract, than by working Dishonour to God's adorable Name, than by casting Reproach on God's heavenly Truth, than by drawing a Scandal on that holy Religion, which the Son of God came down from Heaven to establish, for the Glory of God, and Salvation of Mankind? Surely next after directly blaspheming God, and defying Religion with our own Mouths, the next Crime is to make others to do so, or in effect to do it by their profane Tongues.

There remain divers Arguments of very great Moment, which the Time will not suffer me to urge; and therefore I must reserve them to another Occasion.

SERMON XXXIII.

Provide Things Honest in the Sight of all MEN.

R O M. XII. 17.

Provide things honest in the sight of all Men.

I HAVE formerly discoursed upon this Apostolical Precept ; and having declared the Meaning of it (briefly importing, That we should have a special Care of our external Behaviour, coming under the View and Observation of Men, that it be perfectly innocent and inculpable,) I did propose divers Motives inducing to the Observance of it ; but divers others of great Importance the time would not allow me to urge ; I shall therefore now proceed to offer them to your Consideration.

I did then shew that a regard to the Reason and Nature of Things, to the Satisfaction of our Conscience, to the Honour of God, and to the Credit of our Religion, did require from us a good Conversation before Men : I now farther add, That,

I. The real Interest of Piety and Vertue do exact such a Conversation as the most effectual way of upholding, advancing, and propagating them among Men.

Example is a very powerful thing either way ; both for Attraction to Good, and Seduction to Evil ; such is the Nature of Men, that they are more apt to be guided by the Practice of others, than by their own Reason ; and more easily can write after a Copy, than by a Rule ; that they are prone to imitate whatever they see done, be it good or bad, convenient or inconvenient, profitable or hurtful, emulating the one, and aping the other ; that they love to be in the fashion, and will go any whither in Company, presuming of Support, Defence and Comfort therein ; that they will satisfy their Minds, and justify their Doings by any Authority, deeming that laudable or allowable, or at least tolerable and excusable, for which they can alledge Precedents ; judging that if they are not singular, they are innocent, or however not very culpable ; that they will hardly undertake any thing without Countenance, whereby their Modesty is in some measure secured, and Partners engaged to bear a share with them in the Censure, to which their Deportment is liable. Hence a visible good Conversation will have an Efficacy toward the promotion and propagation of Goodness ; the Authority of that being adjoined to the native Worth and Beauty, to the rational Plausibility, to the sensible Benefit of Vertue, will cogently draw Men to it ; it will be a clear Pattern, whereby they shall be informed what they are obliged, and what they are able to perform ; it will be a notable Spur smartly exciting them to mind and pursue their Duty ; it will be a vigorous Incentive, inflaming their Courage, and provoking an Emulation to do well.

The visible Succour and Countenance of many, espousing the Cause of Goodness by their Practice, will assuredly bring it into Request and Vogue, and thence into current Use and Fashion ; so just a Cause cannot fail to prosper, having any reasonable Forces to maintain it ; it will have great Strength, great Boldness and Assurance, when a considerable Party doth appear engaged on its Side.

Yea sometimes even the Example of a few will do it great Service ; the rarity giving a special Lustre to their Vertue, and rendring it more notable ; according to that intimation of the *Apostle* ; when he thus doth exhort the *Philippians* to a Phil. 2.14, 15. chearful and forward Practice of Goodness ; *Do all things* (saith he) *without Murmuring and Disputings ; that ye may be blameless and harmless, the Sons of God, without rebuke in the midst of a crooked and perverse Generation, among whom ye shine as Lights in the World.*

A good Conversation doth notifie good Men to one another, and draweth them together, and combineth them in a Party, for the Protection of Goodness, heartning and aiding one another therein.

Such Advantages Goodness doth always need ; for it ever hath in the World many Adversaries, striving by violent force to beat it down, or by treacherous Fraud to supplant it ; who use their Authority and Interest to suppress it ; who by their evil Example do seduce from it ; who labour by detraction to blast it, by Scorn and Reproach to discourage it, by divers Temptations and Baits to entice from it ; who combining their Forces with the wicked Spirits, and with the corrupt Inclinations of Men, do raise a mighty Party for Wickedness.

Wherefore to balance such Oppositions, Goodness doth need Friends to maintain it ; not only Friends in Heart, or secret Well-wishers ; but open Friends, who frankly will avow it, and both in Word and Deed will stoutly abet it.

A demure, bashful, timorous Friendship will rather prejudice than help it ; for nothing will more animate its Foes to assail and persecute it, than observing its Friends to flink and sneak ; When good Men hide their Faces, as if they were ashamed of their Goodness, then bad Men will grow more impudent, and insolent in their Outrages against it.

Wherefore, if we would have Goodness hold up its head, we must openly take its Part ; if we would not be guilty of its ruin, we must stand up to uphold it ; for whoever openly complieth with Sin, or neglecteth his Duty, may well be charged with its ruin ; since if thou so desertest Goodness, another after thy Pattern may do the like, and a third may follow him ; so the neglect of it may soon be propagated, until at length it may be quite abandoned, and left destitute of Support : If it doth not thus happen, it will as to thee be accidental, and no thanks to thee for its better Fortune.

The Declension of Piety is not perhaps more to be ascribed to any other Cause, than to this, than that Men who approve Goodness in their Hearts, are so backward to shew it in their Practice ; that good Men do so affect Retirement, and wrapping up their Vertue in Obscurity ; that most Men think it enough if in the Cause of Religion against Profaneness and Dissoluteness they appear *Neuters*, and do not impugn it : For if in a time of Infection all sound Men do shut up themselves, and all sick Men walk abroad, how necessarily must the Plague reign in the Place ?

II. Charity toward our Neighbour demandeth from us a great Care of our Conversation before Men.

The Law of Charity, which is the great Law of Christianity, doth oblige us earnestly to further our Neighbour's Good of all kinds, especially that, which is incomparably his best Good, the Welfare of his Soul ; which how can we better do, than by attracting him to the Performance of his Duty to God, and by withdrawing him from the Commission of Sin ? And how can we do that without an apparently good Conversation, or without plainly declaring, as occasion sheweth, for Vertue, both in Word and Deed ? How can a shy Reservedness conduce to that end ? What will invisible Thoughts or Affections of Heart confer thereto ?

'Tis a precept of Charity, that we should *pursue things, wherewith one may edifie another* ; and how can we perform that Duty, without imparting our Mind, and as it were transfusing it into others ; so as by converting them from Error and Sin, by instilling good Principles, by exciting good Resolutions, to lay in them a Foundation of Goodness, or by cherishing and improving the same to rear a Structure of Vertue in them ? How can we mutually edifie, without mutually advising Vertue, exhorting to it, recommending and impressing it by our exemplary Behaviour ? Rom. 14
1 Cor. 14.20.

Παρακαλεῖτε
ἀλλήλους.
1 Theff. 5. 11.
Heb. 10. 24.
Ἐἰς πρῶτον
μόν.

The *Apostles* do injoin, That we should *exhort one another, and edifie one another*; that we should *consider one another, to provoke* (or to whet and instigate one another) *to love and to good works*; the which can no wise be performed, without expressly declaring for Goodness and remarkable acting in its behalf; To commend and press it by Word is a part of our Duty, but not all of it, nor sufficient to this purpose; especially seeing we cannot urge that with good Confidence, nor shall be held serious in pleading for it, which we do not our selves embrace in Practice; for how can we expect, that our Reason should convince others, when it doth not appear really to have persuaded our selves; when our Doings evidently do argue the Weakness of our Discourse? •

Words hardly will ever move without Practice, although Practice sometimes will persuade without Words; according to that of St. Peter; *Ye Wives be in subjection to your own Husbands, that if any obey not the Word, they may without the Word be won by the Conversation of the Wives, while they behold your chaste Conversation coupled with fear* (or due Reverence to them.)

Again, We are frequently commanded to shun *the giving any Offence*; or *th* putting a *stumbling-block, or an occasion to fall in the way of our Brother*; that is, to do any thing which any-wise may confer his incurring any Sin; the which Precepts are violated not only by positive and active influence, by proposing erroneous Doctrine, evil Advice, fraudulent enticements to Sin, or discouragements from Duty; but also by with-holding the Means serving to prevent his Transgression such as a tacit Indulgence, or Connivance, when good Admonition may reclaim him: the Omission of good Example, when it is seasonable, and probably may prove efficacious; for these Neglects have a moral causality, inducing or encouraging the Commission of Sin; our Silence, our forbearing to act, our declining fair Opportunities to guide him into the right way will be taken for Signs of Approbation and Consent; and consequently as Arguments to justify or excuse bad Practice, in Proportion to the Authority and Esteem we have; which ever will be some in this Case, when they favour the Infirmary of Men.

Charity doth farther oblige us, upon just Cause, and in due Season, to check and reprove our Neighbour misdemeaning himself; for, *Warn the disorderly*, saith the Apostle; and, *Have no fellowship* (saith he) *with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them*; and, *Thou shalt not* (saith the Law) *hate thy Brother in thy Heart, thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy Neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him*; where forbearance of Reproof is implied, to shew not only a defect of Charity, but hatred of our Brother; and a good Reason is intimated for it, because in so doing, we suffer Sin to lie upon him; not hindring his Progress in it, not endeavouring his Conversion from it; but Reproof is an overt Act, involving somewhat of openness and plain freedom, such as the *Wiseman* doth prefer before close goodwill; for, *Open rebuke* (saith he) *is better than secret Love*.

We are all thus far *the keepers of our Brethren*, and it is a Charge incumbent on us, by all good means to preserve them from the worst of Mischiefs.

In fine, there is plainly nothing more inconsistent with true Charity, than such a Compliance with Sin, or Neglect of Duty in the sight of our Neighbour, which is scandalous, or may prove contagious to him; for how can we love him, whose chief Good, whose eternal Welfare we do not tender? Whom we do not fear to seduce into the way of extream Misery, or do not at least care to lead into the Way of Happiness; whom without any check we can suffer to forfeit the best Goods, and to incur the saddest Calamities?

Wherefore if the Love of our selves, and a sober Regard to our own Welfare be not sufficient to induce us, yet a charitable Disposition, and a Concernedness for our Neighbour (for our Brethren, our Relations, our Friends) should move us to a good, innocent, virtuous, fruitful and exemplary Conversation; If we do not care to save our selves, yet let it pity us to damn and destroy others by our Negligence.

III. But if Charity will not move us, yet Justice, exacting from us a care of our good Conversation before Men, should constrain us thereto.

Exemplary and edifying Conversation is a Debt which we owe to the World; a good Office imposed on us by the Laws of common Humanity.

When

When without our own hurt or inconvenience we can do considerable good to our Neighbour, he hath a Title thereto (granted by the common Author of our Nature, the absolute Lord of all we are or have) and he may justly demand it from us; as we in like Case might claim it from him, and certainly would in Matters agreeable to our Humour expect it; Wherefore seeing good Conversation not only doth not harm or incommode us, but is most beneficial to our selves, and it exceedingly may benefit our Neighbour, it is most just that we should afford it to him; it is no more than fair Dealing to do it, to neglect it is a real Injury to him.

To set ill Example before our Neighbour, or (which is in Part, and in Effect the same) to with-hold good Example from him (for not to give a good Example is a bad Thing, and so a bad Example; this) I say is plainly a great Iniquity, and a Wrong to him. For,

Is it not an Injury to offer a Cup of Poison to any Man, to invite him to drink it, to be his taster of it, so drawing him to take it off without Suspicion, or fear of deadly Mischief? Is it not an Injury to forbear warning him thereof, or not to deter him from it, when it standeth before him, and he is ready to put it to his Mouth? Would not such a Man in all conscionable Esteem pass for a Murderer of his Neighbour?

Is it not a great Wrong to carry any Man out of his Way (out of a right, easie, fair, and safe Road) into Mazes, Thickets, and Sloughs, or into intricate, foul, dangerous Bye-ways? Is it not wrongful, when he doth wander or err, not to reduce him thence, not to set him in the right way?

Is it not very foul dealing to bring a Man to a steep Precipice, and thence to leap down before him? Is it not so, not to stop him, when he is on the brink, and blindly moving forward to cast himself down head-long?

If these be injurious Dealings, then palpably it is far more such to yield any Inticements or Encouragements, yea not to put Obstructions, if we are able, to our Neighbours incurring Sin, which to his Soul is all those things; the most baneful Venom, the most woful Exorbitancy, the most pernicious Gulf that can be.

We by *sinning* do not only (as the *Wise-man* saith) *wrong our own Souls*, but we Prov. 8. 36. do also wrong the Souls of others; drawing them, or driving them by the efficacious impulse of our Example into Mischief and Misery; for *When* (saith *St. Paul*) I Cor. 8. 12. *ye sin so against the Brethren, and wound their weak Conscience, ye sin against Christ*; he there speaketh of bad Example: the which he not only affirmeth to be sinful in regard of *Christ*, but calleth it sinning against our Brethren; and supposeth that we thereby do wound, or *smite* their Conscience; which to do is surely no less wrong to them, than if we should assault, beat, and wound their Bodies; the wounds of Conscience being of all most grievous, and producing most insupportable Affliction; according to that of the *Wise-man*, *The spirit of a Man will bear his Infirmities, but a wounded spirit who can bear?* Prov. 18. 14.

Indeed by thus hurting our Neighbour, we do him a Wrong, not only very great in it self, but such as may probably be irreparable, for which hardly we can ever be able to make him any Restitution or Compensation; for a better Example scarce will reach all, whom a bad Example hath touched; the best Example hardly will avail to undo that, which a bad Example hath done; If thereby we have engaged our Neighbour in Sin, we by no means can restore his lost Innocence; or prevent his saying, *Wo be to me, for I have sinned*; It will be very difficult to Lam. 5. 16. recover him into that State (that sound Condition of Soul) from which we did move him; it will however cost him, if not a final Ruin, yet a fore Repentance; I Cor. 8. 11. the Pangs whereof no Compensation, which we can yield, will requite: The Wounds which we thereby do inflict may rankle, and prove incurable; they assuredly will find no easie Cure; they must however either in Consequence, or in the Correction be very painful; and they will leave an ugly Scar behind them.

The Injustice of this Practice may also farther appear, upon divers special Accounts.

All Men esteem Pity a Debt, which one Man oweth to another, as liable to Grief and Misery; (the Obligation whereto is written in the Bowels of each Man) which Pity will incline to succour the Object of it in danger or distress; where-

fore every Man by the natural Law is bound to endeavour the Prevention or the
 Jude 22, 23. Rescue of another falling into Mischief; according to that of St. Jude, *Of some have compassion, making a difference, and others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire*; whence to draw Men into Sin by ill Practice, or not to restrain them from it by good, is unjust, as a pitiless hard-hearted, cruel thing.

1 Sam. 3. 13. (*His Sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not.*)

Again, All Men hold Flattery to be a Practice very abusive, or more than simply wrongful: as with Injury joining Contempt and Cozenage: taking Advantage of a Man's Infirmary to work Prejudice to him; it is indeed a mischievous, a pernicious, and withal a perfidious, an insidious, and ensnaring Practice; for, *A flattering Mouth (saith the Wise-man) worketh ruin, and A Man that flattereth his Neighbour, spreadeth a Net for his feet.* But Flattery is not only verbal; the worst Flattery is not that whereby Men sooth and gloze with their Lips, encouraging others by fictitious Commendations to persist in bad Courses; there is a tacit Flattery, when by our connivance at Sin we seem to approve it; there is a real Flattery when by our compliance with Sin, we recommend it to our *Comrades*; These do not look so grossly, yet do insinuate into our Mind, and commonly do inveigle to Sin more effectually; Men being more apt to trust our Deeds than our Words, being more pleased in our vouching their Actions by a participation in them, and running a common Hazard with them, than in our straining to commend, or to excuse them: whence it is, that gross Flattery hath its effect chiefly upon simpler Folks, but this subtle Flattery doth often gull and abuse Persons of greatest Capacity.

Prov. 31. 30. *Favour is deceitful.*

Prov. 26. 28.

29. 5.

Again, A good Conversation before Men is a Part of that due Respect, which we owe to them; There is a Regard, and a kind of Reverence to be had toward every Man; which should engage us to behave our selves decently in his Presence, signifying a Consideration and Esteem of his Person, of his Opinion, of his Resentment, of his Affection toward us: To do any foul or unhandsome thing is a contempt of him, a rudeness toward him, an affront put on him; whereby in effect we do slight, disparage and reproach him; implying, that we do little value his Judgment, that we care not for his Good-will; that we presume he hath not the Sense to discern, or hath not the Spirit to dislike, or must have the Patience to comport with our unseemly and unfavoury Carriage; And if to do other unhandsome Things before Men is such an Indignity offered to them, then it is especially such to commit Sin before them, which is the most ugly, the most sordid, the most loathsome Behaviour that can be; there is no Deformity, no Turpitude in Nature comparable to Sin; nothing so offensive, so distastful, so abominable to a rational Sense; so that the *Wise-man's* Saying is very true, taken any-way, *He that despiseth his Neighbour, sinneth*; 'tis both a Sin to contemn him; and sinning is an Argument of Contempt toward him; Nor can we better observe St. Peter's Injunction, that we *honour all Men*, than by forbearing to Sin in their Presence, out of Respect to them. But farther,

Prov. 14. 21.

11. 12.

1 Pet. 2. 17.

IV. Let us consider, that a good Conversation before Men is a publick Benefit, a great Advantage to the World, and common State of Men.

It is not only a good Office of Charity to this or that Man; but it layeth a general Obligation on our Country, on our Age, on Posterity it self; upon which a fruitful Life, an exemplary Vertue may have notable influence.

As notorious Sin is a Plague to the World, throwing Infection and Death about it; provoking the Wrath of Heaven, and thence deriving Vengeance on it; So notable Vertue is a general Blessing, producing most wholesome and comfortable Effects to Mankind.

For how can one more oblige the Publick, than by conferring Help to uphold the Reputation, and to propagate the Entertainment of those Things which are the main Props of the World, for the Sake of which it standeth, and by the Means of which it is sustained; than by preserving the Vertue and Power of Conscience, which is the Band of all Society, the Guardian of Faith and Honesty, the best Ensurer of Justice, Order, and Peace in the State; (that which *exalteth a Nation, and establisheth a Kingdom*) than by producing and promoting those Things, which certainly will procure the Favour and Blessing of God on any People?

Prov. 14. 34.

20. 28.

How can a Man better deserve of the World, than by concurring to stop the Contagion of Sin, and the overspreading Deluge of Iniquity, together with all the lamentable Mischiefs consequent on them; than by averting the fierce Wrath, and severe Judgments of God, which a general Prevalence of Wickedness necessarily will bring down?

Most Men pretend to be concerned even for the Honour of their Country; and how can we better promote that, than by checking the Progress of *sin*, which will not only be the Bane, but *is* (as Solomon telleth us) *the reproach of any People?* Prov. 14. 34.

It may possibly be, it hath really been, that the conspicuous Vertue of a few Men (yea sometimes of one single Person) hath leavened a Country, hath seasoned an Age, hath imbued Posterity with an Admiration of Goodness, and with an Affection to it. (*One Man, faith St. Chrysostome, enflamed with Zeal, may suffice to reform an entire People.*) So among the Pagans, one Person did set up the Study of Morality, and worthily was stiled *the Parent of* (that most useful) *Philosophy*, whereby he did exceedingly benefit Mankind, and did confer much toward preparing Men for the Reception of our heavenly Philosophy.

Ἀρχὴ αἰς ἀνθρώπων ἡ χάρις πιστῶ-
ν, ὁλοκληρὸν διορθώσασθαι δῆμον.
Chrys. Ἀνδρ. δ.

Socrates phi-
losophia pa-
rens. Cic.

Such our Lord designed his *Apostles* to be; for, *Ye* (faith he) *are the lights of the world, ye are the salt of the earth*; and such in effect they did prove, *God by them* (as St. Paul faith) *manifesting the favour of his knowledge in every place*; they not only by their heavenly Doctrine, but chiefly by the Lustre and Influence of their holy Example, converting the World from impious Errours and naughty Practices, unto true Religion, and vertuous Conversation: They did lead Men to Goodness not only by the Ears, but by the Eyes, seeing their excellent Life, and *walking as they had them for ensample.*

Matt. 5. 13.

14.

2 Cor. 2. 14.

It consequently may be, yea hath been, that the singular Integrity of one, or of a few Persons, displaying it self, hath appeased Divine Wrath, and hath staved off imminent Ruin from a People. So one *Noah* publicly maintaining, and *preaching righteousness*, did preserve the whole Race of Men from Extirpation: So ten Persons avowing Righteousness would have kept *Sodom* from that rueful Destruction: So one good Man (notably owning God, and interposing for the Concerns of Piety) might have prevented that calamitous Vengeance, which fell upon *Israel*; as *Jeremy* told before, and *Ezekiel* affirmed after it; *Run ye to and fro* (faith God in *Jeremy*) *through the streets of Jerusalem, and see now and know, and seek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find a Man, if there be any that executeth judgment, that seeketh truth, and I will pardon it*; and, *I sought for a man* (faith God in *Ezekiel*) *among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it; but I found none: therefore have I poured mine indignation upon them.* There was then a remnant of those who closely did serve God; and perhaps *seven thousand* unknown Persons, who had not in their Hearts deserted Religion; but this did not avert God's Wrath, or preserve the Nation from Captivity; as a few openly professing, and resolutely practising Goodness, might have done.

Phil. 3. 17.

1 Cor. 11. 1.

1 Cor. 4. 16.

2 Thess. 3. 7, 9.

2 Pet. 2. 5.

Gen. 18. 32.

Jer. 5. 1.

Ezek. 22. 30.

Isa. 1. 9.

1 Kings 19.

14, 18.

Now who would not be glad of being so publick a Friend, so general a Benefactor, in performing that, which doth otherwise so much become him, and so greatly behove him; yielding him the best Ornaments, and highest Advantages even upon his private Account? Who would not be ambitious both to oblige his Country, and to save his own Soul together, by a worthy Conversation?

Assuredly nothing can be devised more conducive to the effecting a reformation and amendment of the World (and consequently to the Prosperity and Felicity of Mankind here) than a Conspiracy of good Men in a frank and brisk avowing of Goodness in the Face of the World.

V. A Care of our Conversation in the sight of Men, is needful for the Preservation of our good Name, and fair Repute among them.

A good Name in holy Scripture, is represented as a special Gift, and Blessing of God; bestowed in recompence of Piety and Vertue; and preferred before other most considerable Gifts and Blessings, concerning our external State; for, *By humility* (faith the *Wise man*) *and the fear of the Lord, are riches and honour*; both are the Rewards of Piety; but comparing them, *A good name* (faith he) *is rather to be chosen than great riches*; It cannot therefore be a contemptible Thing, nor

1 Chr. 29. 12.

Ecc. 6. 2.

(Ecc. 7. 1.)

Prov. 22. 4.

(Ps. 112. 9.)

Prov. 22. 1.

ought it to be neglected by us ; for none of God's Gifts, no Reward which he proposeth, ought to be slighted.

Δι' οικονομίαν
τινα. Anton.
4. §. 19.

Reason and Experience also do concur in shewing that a good Repute is a valuable Thing, not only as a fair Ornament of our Persons, and a commodious Instrument of Action toward our private Welfare ; as a guard of our Safety and Quiet, as serving to procure divers Conveniences of Life ; but as very advantageous, very useful upon moral and spiritual Accompts ; qualifying us with greater Ease and Efficacy to serve God, and to do good ; for indeed 'tis manifest, that without it we shall be incapable of doing God or Man any considerable Service.

Matt. 7. 16.
12. 33.

Wherefore in Duty and Wisdom we should be careful of preserving this Jewel ; the which we cannot otherwise do, than by observing this *Apostolical* Rule, of *providing things honest in the sight of all men* ; for a good Conversation is the only guard and convoy of a good Name : How can Men conceive a good Opinion of us, otherwise than from a view of worthy Qualities and good Deeds ? They may charitably hope, but they cannot confidently judge well of us, otherwise than upon good Evidence : *Ye shall know them by their fruits* (that is, by apparent Works, falling under human Cognisance) is the Rule, whereby our Saviour teacheth us to distinguish of Men, and to build a right Opinion concerning them : Honour is the Shadow, the inseparable Attendant of conspicuous Vertue.

A good Conversation will indeed command Esteem, and irresistibly extort Respect from all Men.

Rom. 14. 18.

Wise and good Men heartily will approve it, and gladly will yield it due Commendation ; they cannot but honour it whenever they see it, as best suiting with their own Judgment, and with their Affection.

Οἱ ἐν βασιλείᾳ τῶτο ποιοῦντες, καὶ τὸ σίνειδος ὑμῶς θαυμάσουσι, ἢ ἀποδείξουσι. ὡς περ ἐν διφανερῶς κολακούμεντοις τὰς ἐν ποικίλῃ ζῶντας, καὶ νῦν διαβάλλουσιν. Chrys. in Matt. 5. 10.

Yea, it will procure Respect even from the worst Men ; for it is a mistake to think, that bad Men really do or can despise true Goodness ; in Truth, however they may pretend or make a Shew to slight and scorn it, however in Words they may flout and revile it, yet in their Hearts they cannot but admire and reverence it ; although their Will may be so perverted as to set them against, yet their Reason cannot be so destroyed (or natural Light so quenched in them) as to disapprove it ; they do but vilely dissemble, and bely their Conscience, when they

make as if they did condemn, or contemn it : *As (saith St. Chrysostome) they who openly do flatter ill livers, do in their mind reprove them ; so they who envy the workers of good, in their Conscience will admire and approve them* : At least they will do thus

in their sober Mind ; when with any serious Application they do reflect on things ; when the eye of their Soul is any-wise cleared from the Mists of Lust and Passion : It is not to be heeded what they say in a Fluster or ranting Mood ; when they are near out of their Wits, and have their Judgment stifled by sensual Imaginations ; but what they think, when their Mind is somewhat composed, and natural Light doth shine freely in it.

Indeed such Wretches really do most despise those, who consort and comply with them in sinful Follies : As they cannot in their Hearts honour themselves, so they cannot esteem those whom they find like unto them ; especially they despise those whom they observe to be so base and silly, as against their own Judgment and Conscience, to fear their Displeasure, or to regard their Censure ; looking upon them as Vassals to their Humour, and Renegadoes from their own Conscience.

1 Sam. 2. 30.

Moreover, a good Conversation certainly will engage Almighty God to protect our Reputation, and to confer Honour upon us. For he, as Governour of the World, the Patron of Goodness, the Dispenser of proper Rewards to all, is in a manner bound to Encourage those openly, who visibly do own him and take his Part, who promote his Glory and Interest, who pay him due Service and Obedience ; who in regard to his Authority, do faithfully pursue that which is right and good ; He surely will see fit to repay such in the same Kind, by openly Acknowledging, Countenancing, and Honouring them ; Accordingly he hath tied himself to do so by his express Word and Promise ; for, *Them, saith he, that honour me, I will honour ; and they that despise me, shall be lightly esteemed* ; he said it in reference to old *Eli*, who had neglected the Duty of *restraining his sons* from sin ; which is a Case very much of kin to all neglect of exemplary Piety. And, *Whosoever, saith our Lord, shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of Man also confess before the*

Luke 12. 8.

the Angels of God; but he that denieth me before men, shall be denied before the Angels of God; the which (one most comfortable, the other most terrible) Sentences are to be understood, He that confesseth our Lord not merely by verbal Profession, (for divers such who say, Lord, Lord, he will not so much as know at the final Judgment) but in real Practice; He that denieth him, not only by renouncing him with the Tongue, but by disobeying him in scandalous Conversation, by working Iniquity, by the Apostasie of bad Manners. Matt. 7. 22, 23.

VI. Lastly, The publick Discharge of a good Conscience will yield manifold Advantages, and great Benefits to our selves; not only as good (and thence needful to our Salvation, and our Comfort) but as publick; some of which I shall touch.

Such a Practice will much secure and strengthen us in Goodness; for he that hath the Heart, with Resolution and Constancy to do well, notwithstanding any worldly Discouragement, although he thereby doth cross the Humour of the World, and incurreth the Displeasure, Envy, Hatred, Censure, and Obloquy of Men, he thus having exalted his Vertue above the Favour and Fear of the World, hath set it in a safe Place, hath render'd it impregnable.

The Consideration of having obtained so happy, and so worthy a Victory over the most dangerous Temptations, (the Victory of Faith over the World) will be very comfortable; And the Sufferings which (from the Disfavour, Enmity, and Opposition of Men) do attend such a Practice, being a kind of Martyrdom, will yield all the Joys and Comforts (together with the Hopes and Rewards) of an heroical Patience. 1 John 4.

It will afford great Satisfaction of Mind, to reflect on the Consequences of such a Practice; and to consider, that our Resolution hath engaged or confirmed others in Goodness, hath preserved them from Sin, hath withdrawn them from bad Courses, and saved them from Perdition; that we have been instrumental to the Salvation and Happiness of any Soul; that beside our own Sins (which are a Burthen too heavy for any Man well to bear) we have not the Sins of others to account for, and shall not be loaded with the Guilt of those, whom our neglect of Duty, our compliance with Sin, our stupid coldness and indifference in regard to spiritual Affairs, our dissimulation or connivance at the scandalous Violation of God's Honour, and Transgression of his Laws, might have encouraged in Sin; that we are not liable to that Reproof in the Prophet, *Ye have strengthened the hands of the wicked, that he should not return from his wicked way.* Ezek. 13. 22.

We shall highly oblige those, whom by our good Endeavour or Example we shall convert to Righteousness, or reclaim from Iniquity, or shall any-wise stop in their Career to Ruin; who when they shall recover from their Errour, and soberly reflect on their Case, (when they shall *ἀναμνησθῶν*, become again sober, getting out as it were of their drunken fit) will heartily thank us, will bless us, will pray for us, as having laid on them a very great Obligation, and done them the greatest Kindness that could be; so that they will be ready to say to us, as *David* did to *Abigail*, *Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, who sent thee this day to meet me; and blessed be thy advice; and blessed be thou, which hast kept me this day from shedding of blood;* This will be the Consequence of plain Dealing in such Cases, and that will be fulfilled which the *Wise-man* saith, *He that rebuketh a man, afterwards shall find more favour, than he that flattereth with the tongue.* 2 Tim. 2. 26. 1 Sam. 25. 32. Prov. 28. 23. 27. 6. 19. 25.

We thereby shall escape the sore Complaints, and fell Curses of those, whom our naughty or careless Demeanour hath involved in sinful Practice; for when their Conscience is awakened into a Sense of their Guilt, when they feel the Stings of Remorse, when they perceive the extreme Damage and Woe which they have incurred, then will they discharge their Resentments of Heart against those, who have any-wise been accessory to their fall into such a Condition; then in their Bitterness of Soul, in the Agony of their Sorrow and Perplexity, they will be apt to exclaim, *Curst be the Day that I knew such an one, or that I did converse with him, who did betray me into this plight, who did inveigle me into Temptation, who did not pluck me back from that sinful Practice, by which I now so deeply suffer; Curst be his base Cowardice, his fond Modesty, his affected Wisdom, his treacherous Negligence, his unconscionable Indifference, his impious want of Zeal for God's Honour, and Charity for my Soul, which did keep him from checking*

Acts 20. 26.
Ezek. 7. 17.
33. 7.

checking me in my bad Courses, and reclaiming me to my Duty by wholesome Reproof, by seasonable Advice, by exemplary Practice before me : It will surely be a great Comfort to us, that we have not given Occasion for such Complaints ; but in proportion may say with St. Paul, *I am pure from the blood of all men, for I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God.*

It is also no small Advantage to us, that by a good Conversation we shall procure the particular Friendship and Affection of good Men ; for it is that, which discovereth good Men to one another, which kindleth their Affection toward each other, which draweth them together, and breedeth a Familiarity between them, and knitteth their Hearts together in a holy Love ; from whence they come to enjoy the faithful Advice, the kind Assistance, the seasonable Consolations, and the hearty Prayers of each other ; the which great Benefits are lost by concealment of our selves, and reservedness in doing Good : For how can any Man know him to deserve Love, whose Goodness is not discernible ?

Such Considerations may induce all Persons, of every Rank and Condition, to observe this Apostolical Precept, so far as their Capacities do reach. I shall only adjoin, that it especially doth concern Persons of Quality, in Proportion to their Eminency in Dignity, Power, Authority, Reputation, or any peculiar Advantage, whereby the beneficial Efficacy of good Conversation is encreased.

Mat. 5. 15.

Such Persons are like *a city seated on a mountain, which cannot be hid* ; the height of their Station, and lustre of their Quality, do expose them to the Observation of all ; and their Authority doth recommend their Practice to the Imitation of Observers.

Their Example cannot fail of having a mighty Influence ; its Light doth guide Men, its Weight doth sway them ; it doth seem to warrant and authorize Practice ; Inferiours would be afraid or ashamed to discontinue from it.

They have not the Temptations, which other Men have, to comply with Sin out of Fear, out of Complaisance, out of Design ; they being to lead and give Law, not to follow or receive it ; they being the first movers in Conversation ; the Fashion being regulated by them, or indeed being meerly a Conformity to their Deportment.

Const. Apost.
2. 17.

They should by their Innocence qualify themselves to reprove others with Authority and Courage.

They in Gratitude to God, who hath bestowed on them such Advantages, are obliged to employ them for his Service.

Rom. 13. 3—

6.

1 Pet. 2. 14.

They particularly were designed and endowed with those Advantages, that by them they might countenance, might encourage, might reward, might by all means promote Goodness in the World.

They accordingly are responsible for the Influence their Conversation hath ; so that in the final Account most Actions of Men will lie at their Door, so that they shall respectively be either highly rewarded for the Vertues and good Works, or severely punished for the Vices and Sins of Mankind : The which most weighty Consideration I leave by God's Grace to be seriously applied by them, who are concerned therein.

SERMON XXXIV.

Provide Things Honest in the Sight of all MEN.

2 COR. VIII. 21.

Providing for honest things not only in the sight of the Lord, but in the sight of Men.

IF we observe the World, we may easily therein discern many Persons, who being inwardly well-disposed (standing right both in Judgment and Affection to Goodness) are yet loth to appear very good, and hardly will own Christian Vertue, in the constant Discharge of publick Duties, or in strict Abstinence from sinful

sinful Practices ; but commonly (against the Dictate of their Reason, and Sense of their Heart) neglect the one, and comply with the other : An odd Sort of Hypocrites, or Dissemblers, who studiously conceal their better Part, and counterfeit themselves worse than they are ; who adore God in their Hearts, and address Devotions to him in their Closets ; but scarce will avow him in their visible Profession and Practice ; who have a Conscience, but are shy of disclosing it, or letting it take air, and walk in open light ; confining it as a Criminal to close Restraint, or obscure Retirement ; who gladly would be religious and staunch, if there might be no notice taken of it, but take care of being remarkable (or as it were scandalous) for it ; who think fit to compromise, and compound the Business between God and the World, maintaining a Neutrality, and Correspondence with both, so as privately to court the one, and publickly to close with the other.

Such Practice is flatly repugnant to that Rule, which elsewhere in Precept, and here by his own Example the holy *Apostle* doth recommend to us ; directing us not only *before God* (that is, in our Heart, and in our secret Retirements, which God alone doth behold) but also *before men*, that is, in our external and visible Conversation, carefully to perform Things good and laudable, eschewing whatever is bad or culpable. Rom. 12. 17.
 Ἐν παντί Κυ-
 ρίον

Our Obligation to which Rule hath already been confirmed by divers other Precepts in *holy Scripture*, concurring in the Injunction of it ; and its Observance urged by various positive Considerations of great Weight and Force (declaring how necessary it is for promoting God's Honour and Glory, how requisite it is for maintaining the Dignity of our Profession, and advancing the Interests of Goodness, how Charity and Justice toward our Neighbour do exact it from us, how conducive it is to the publick Benefit of Mankind, and how advantageous in many Respects to our own particular Welfare) and not insisting farther upon those Considerations, I shall now only inforce it, by scanning the common Principles, Grounds, Motives, Pretences, or Excuses of the contrary Practice, which I before touched, of openly deserting Vertue, or declining the Performance of Duty before Men ; and by shewing how very foolish and vain, how very naughty and base, how very mischievous, dangerous, and pernicious they are.

They chiefly are those, which I shall immediately touch and reflect upon.

I. Men commonly in their visible Conversation do neglect their Duty, or comply with Sin out of Modesty ; because they are ashamed of doing that, which may expose them to some Disgrace or Censure ; because vertuous Practice may raise Dislike in the Company, and provoke the Scorn of those with whom they converse ; because such a Point of Duty is out of Request, and slighted in the World ; they are *afraid of mens faces* ; their tender Fore-head cannot sustain Derision, or endure to be flouted for being out of the Mode, and wearing an uncouth Garb of Conscience. Jer. 1. 8.

But this plainly is a perverse, and unmanly Modesty ; a fond, a vile, a shameful Shame : Fy on it ! Should any Man be ashamed of that, which is his chief Beauty, his best Ornament, his sole Dignity and Glory ? Should a Man be ashamed of being evidently wise in his Conduct, of following his Reason, of consulting his true Interest, of pursuing his own certain Welfare and Felicity ? Is it fit that any Man should be ashamed of paying due Acknowledgment, of yielding due Reverence, of rendering due Gratitude, of performing due Service to his Creator, Sovereign Lord, and great Benefactor ; to whom he oweth all, upon whose Will he entirely dependeth, at whose absolute Disposal he is ? Surely these are no shameful Things, but such rather, wherein we ought to have the greatest Confidence, which we ought to perform with the greatest Assurance.

If we are bashful, let us be so in regard to Things which are truly shameful ; let us be ashamed of Sin, that is, of our most real Deformity, our Turpitude, our Disgrace, our Wretchedness ; the which indeed is the only dishonourable and despicable Thing ; the which did first produce Shame, and did introduce it into the World (for while Innocence did abide, there was no Shame) and the which will ever carry Shame along as its inseparable Adherent : It would indeed become us to blush at our horrible Unworthiness, and detestable Ingratitude toward our bountiful Lord, and most gracious Redeemer ; it were proper for us to be confounded at our extreme Folly, and foul Treachery toward our selves, in betray-
ing Gen. 3. 2.
 2. 25.

ing our Souls to Guilt, to Regret, to Wrath and Punishment: Who should be ashamed, who not, the holy *Psalmist* hath well taught us, *Let none that wait on thee be ashamed; let them be ashamed which transgress without cause; and, Let the proud be ashamed—but, Let my heart be sound in thy statutes, that I be not ashamed.*

It is true Modesty to be ashamed of doing unworthy and unhandfome Things; but to be ashamed of doing what Reason and Duty require, is pitiful Weakness of Mind.

We do not owe so much Regard to vicious and vain Persons, as to be dashed out of Countenance by them, we should rather by our Masculine Resolution and upright Confidence put them to Confusion.

If Shame be an Evil which we would avoid, the only Remedy thereof we may learn from those Words of the *Psalmist*, *Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect to thy testimonies*: But it is a fond Course to shun Disgrace by doing that which alone deserveth it.

Quid queso rationis habet verecundari ad diem hominis, & vultum Dei non vereri? Bern. Ep. 108.

Is it not also a wild Thing, to seem modest toward Men, while we are really so bold with God, as presumptuously to offend him, to affront him, to provoke him (as those in the Prophet did) to his face? For so indeed every Sinner doth; and as it is the greatest Inadvertency not to consider God always present with us, so it is the Height of Impudence to sin in his Presence, or to prefer a Regard to Men before the Reverence due to his Eye.

Is it not also great Folly, for declining a little present transient Disgrace, to do that, whereof afterward we shall be grievously and perpetually ashamed; which we shall never remember or reflect upon without confusion, (according to that of the *Apostle*, *What fruit had ye of those things, whereof ye are now ashamed?*) the Consequence whereof is our standing obnoxious to shame and everlasting contempt?

If we be thus ashamed of God, and of our Duty to him, may he not justly in recompence be ashamed of us, and disdain to own us in Favour and Mercy? He will surely, he hath often declared so; *Whosoever, saith our Lord, shall be ashamed of me, and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's, and of the holy Angels.*

2. Another Principle, near of kin to the Former, disposing Men to commit Sin, or wave Duty in their open Conversation, is, Fear of losing the Good-will, or getting the Ill-will of Men.

It must often happen, that whoever will be vertuous, and stick to his Duty, will forfeit the Favour of Men, will incur their Displeasure, will provoke their Indignation; by crossing their Humour and Conceit, by implicitly slighting their Opinion, and condemning their Practice; this is the Portion and Fate of strict and stiff Piety; the Friendship of God and the World are not well consistent; and St. Paul's Rule may be converted, *If I should please men, I should not be the servant of Christ*: Hence Men, prizing the Favour of Men, with the Advantages of it, and dreading their Anger, Hatred, Disdain, with the Mischiefs consequent on them, are scared from their Duty.

Jam. 4. 4.
1 John 2. 15.
Gal. 1. 10.

But in Truth this is a silly, a base, a sorry Fear, arguing wretched Meanness of Spirit, and pitiful Cowardice. For,

Dost thou, fond Wretch, fear to lose the Favour of Man, whose Favour doth avail nothing to thy main Interests, and cannot any-wise considerably benefit thee, (for in no respect dost thou depend on his Will and Providence) but dost not fear being deprived of God's Favour, upon which all thy Good hangeth, wherein thy Felicity consisteth, without which thou art incapable of any Prosperity, of any Security, of any Joy or Comfort?

Dost thou fear the Displeasure of Man, of poor impotent Man, a sorry frail worm, whose breath is in his nostrils, (ready to fly away in every Moment) whose Anger can do thee no real Harm, whose Power can hardly touch thee, can no-wise reach thy Soul, or its Concerns; whilst thou darest not to offend the Eternal Almighty God, under whose Feet thou liest, ready to be crushed into nothing, or stamp'd down into Hell at his Pleasure?

Job 25. 6.
Isa. 2. 22.
Matt. 10. 28.

Darest thou not, O heartless Dastard, to do that, which is in thy Power easily to do, which thou art infinitely concerned to do, which upon so many accompts thou art obliged to do, out of fear to cross thine equal, yea far thine inferiour in this Case;

Case ; for he that standeth to his Duty, as he hath the better Cause, so he hath the greater Force, and assuredly will defeat all his Opposers ?

Art thou, O pusillanimous Slave, in regard to any Creature, thy Fellow-subject and Servant, afraid of expressing thy Loyalty to thy Sovereign Lord, thy Love to infinite Goodness, thy Gratitude to thy best Friend and kindest Benefactor, thy Reverence toward the Divine Majesty, thine Awe of uncontrollable Power : Is this a reasonable, an excusable, a tolerable Fear ?

Surely, if ever to be driven out of Heart is reproachful, if ever to be cowed doth argue Infirmity and Abjectness of Spirit, it is in this Case ; when we have all the Reason and Obligation in the World to be most courageous and resolute, to fear no Colours, to make our Party good against all Opposition ; when we have the greatest necessity to engage us, and the greatest Advantage to encourage us to hold out stoutly ; the greatest necessity, seeing all that we have, our Life, our Salvation, our eternal Weal doth lie at Stake ; *For it is not a vain thing for you, Deut. 32. 47. because it is your Life : The greatest Advantage, for that if we will, we are invincible, and assured of an easy Victory, seeing we take Part with God, and have Omnipotency on our side ; so that we can say with David, The Lord is my helper, I will not fear what Man can do unto me : The Lord is my light, and my salvation, whom shall I fear ? The Lord is the strength of my life, of whom shall I be afraid ?*

Psal. 118. 6. Heb. 13. 6.
Psal. 56. 11. 11. 4. 27. 1. 3. 46. 2.
Jer. 1. 8. 20. 11. Isa. 41. 10.
Gen. 26. 24. 15. 1.
Numb. 14. 9. Deut. 31. 8.
2 Chron. 20. 17.

There is not indeed to those who are under God's special Protection, and confide in him, any thing in nature, really formidable or terrible ; it is his peculiar Attribute to be the Mighty and Terrible One : He recommendeth himself to us as *our fear*, that is, the special Object of it ; we therefore do sacrilegiously wrong him, by fearing any other Thing in such Cases of Competition, and when we are concerned to fear him ; whence then we are prohibited to fear the greatest Powers in the World ; *Fear not them which kill the Body (if God permit them) but are not able to kill the Soul ; but rather fear him who is able to destroy both Body and Soul in Hell.*

Jer. 5. 22.
10. 7.
Rev. 15. 4.
Deut. 7. 21.
10. 17. 28. 58.
Ps. 76. 7, 11.
99. 3.
Isa. 8. 12.

Who (saith St. Peter) is he that will (or that can) harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good ? — Wherefore be not afraid of their Terror, neither be troubled ; but sanctify the Lord God in your Hearts (by a pure Confidence in him.)

41. 10.
Matt. 10. 26.
28.
Τὴς δὲ καρδίας
σαν ; 1 Pet. 3.
13, 14.

In such Cases, we should be ready to accost the greatest Potentates, in Terms like those of the three brave Youths in *Daniel* : *O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter : If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery Furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine Hand, O King ; But (however) if not, be it known unto thee, O King, that we will not serve thy Gods, nor worship thy golden Image which thou hast set up : And if in imitation of so worthy an Example, we should defy the Wrath of the greatest Kings, demanding any sinful Compliance from us, how poor a Thing is it to fear the Displeasure of sorry Companions enticing us to the like ? How much more should we defy all the Crew of hectoring Ruffians, and huffing Bragadochios ?*

Dan. 3. 16.

While wicked profane Men are so bold and stout in impugning Goodness ; we should be courageous in defence of it. *The Righteous is as bold as a lion.*

Prov. 28. 1.

The Fear of God (the which is most reasonable and prudent, and consistent with the bravest Courage) should exclude the Fear of Men ; the which is no less vain than base ; the which indeed doth involve the wildest Boldness, and most rash Fool-hardiness in the World, pushing us into the most desperate Adventures that can be ; while by Sinning we incense the most dreadful Anger, we invade the most formidable Power, we incur the most horrible Dangers, we run headlong into the Jaws of Death and Hell : Such a Mixture there is of base Cowardise, and mad Audacity in Practices issuing from that Principle.

3. Men commonly do neglect the open Practice of Vertue, out of Care to decline Envy ; for ill Men seeing others endowed with worthy Qualities, which they want ; performing good Deeds, from which their Infirmity or Pravity doth hold them averse ; entitled to Commendations, Rewards and Advantages to which they cannot aspire, and whereby they seem to eclipse their Credit, or impair their Interest, or expose their Unworthiness ; cannot look on such Persons without an *evil Eye*, or without conceiving in their Heart malevolent Grudges at them, which they will be apt to vent in spiteful Practices, endeavouring to supplant or blast their

Vertue ; Men are apt to envy the Favourites of God, as they are of Princes. Nor indeed doth any thing more powerfully incite Men to hurt their Neighbour, than such Malignity, being edged by that Anguish, which their sore Eye doth feel ; to shun which Envy, and its mischievous Effects, Men commonly are tempted to withdraw its Cause, their own Vertue, that its bright Lustre may not wound the Sight of such Neighbours.

But thus to appease Envy by deserting Vertue is very fond and absurd. For,

Shall I cast away my best Goods, because another would not have me to enjoy them ? Shall I be terribly sick, to cure another's distemper'd Fancy ? Shall I render my self miserable, because another doth not like to see me happy ? Because he doth want Charity, must I forego Innocence ? Because he doth not love me, shall I hate my self ? To please him merely, without bettering him, to ease him of a wholsom Smart, shall I displease God, and abuse my self ?

Would he not be a silly Man, who being envied because he seemeth a Favourite of his Prince, would to gratifie such Enviars offend his Prince ? No surely, this is too fond a regard unto any Man's base Disposition, this is too great a Gratification of an Enemy's Pleasure, this is too slavish a Depression of a Man's self ; rather let him fret, let him torment himself, let him inflict a just Punishment on his own uncharitable and unworthy Humour ; whereby perhaps he may be reduced to discern his Folly, and correct his Fault.

Would any Man upon such Terms part with his Estate, mar his Business, flur his Reputation, or purposely play the fool ? Would any Man become poor, infamous or contemptible, because to be rich, to be prosperous, to be honourable, to be wise are invidious Things ? Much less should a Man upon that Account neglect his Duty, thereby betraying his Soul, discarding the Love and Favour of God, destroying the Satisfaction of his Conscience, and forfeiting his hopes of Felicity : Damages and Mischiefs comparable to which all the Envy and Spight in the World can no wise bring upon him.

If we would avoid Envy, we should not do it by incurring a worse Evil, and rendring our selves contemptible for Unworthiness ; we should rather damp it by Modesty, Humility, an inoffensive Tenour of Life.

We should surmount it, and quash it by constant blameless Conversation. The which will kill the Envious, or the Envy.

An unquestionable Vertue will stop the Mouth of Detraction, and drive Envy into Corners, not daring to shew it self against it.

4. A common Principle, from whence Neglect of Duty, and Commission of Sin in visible Conversation doth spring, is a fear of Infamy, and Reproach, whereto the strict Practice of Vertue is liable : Men not enduring to bear the odious Censures, the foul Imputations, the ugly Characters, the scurvy Epithets, and opprobrious Names, wherewith the bold and spiteful Enemies of Goodness are wont to asperse and brand its faithful Adherents.

To be deemed weak, credulous, superstitious, formal, timorous, nice, squeamish, scrupulous, strait-laced, conceited, affected, cross, surly, morose, froward, stubborn, pertinacious, proud.

To be termed a foppish *Simpleton*, doting on Speculations, and enslaved to Rules ; a fantastical *Humorist*, a precise *Bigot*, a rigid *Stoick*, a demure *Sneakby*, a clownish *Singularist*, a *Non-conformist* to ordinary Usage, a stiff *Opiniatre* ; a Man of a pitiful narrow Spirit, pent up within a small Compass, confined by Principles, fettered by Laws, living in Bondage to his Conscience.

These and the like hard Censures, foul Reproaches, and abusive Scoffs, even all which Invention quickned by Envy, Choler, rancorous Spite, and aided by the malicious Fiend, can suggest, wherewith the profane Crew of Men usually do conspire to daub and persecute those who refuse to comply with their unconscionable Extravagancies and Impieties, Men can hardly brook, and thence to shun them yield up all, cross their Reason, prostitute their Conscience, violate all their Obligations ; chusing rather to be justly reproachable for bad Actions, than unjustly reproached for good.

But with such a Person, who is thus diverted from his Duty, let me expostulate :

Doest thou well to regard what unbridled Tongues out of a wanton Mind and corrupt Heart do sputter and foam ? Shall thy Practice depend on their loose Wit or licentious Talk, so that

that thou must do nothing which they shall not be in humour to commend ?

Wilt thou renounce all Wisdom, abandon thy best Interest, forfeit thy Happiness to decline a Squib, or a Flurt ? *Quid de te alii loquantur, ipsi videant. Scipio apud Cic. in Somn.*

Would not he be a stark Fool who would be railed or jeered out of his Way in Travel, out of his Business in Traffick, out of his Estate, or real Interest upon any Occasion ; and is he not evidently far more such, who will be flouted out of his Duty, out of his Salvation, out of any spiritual Advantage ? Was not the Practice of David more adviseable, who said, *The proud have had me in derision, yet have I* Psal. 119. 51. *not declined from thy Law ?*

David, a great King, a Man of singular Courage and Gallantry, a glorious Hero ; yet even him did bold and base People deride. Whom will not profane Impudence assail ? Whom will not they attempt to deter from Goodness ?

Art thou so blind, as not to discern whence it cometh, that they disparage Vertue ? That is, from their extreme Vanity and Rashness, which move them to speak any thing without Consideration or Discretion ; from their great naughtiness and weakness, their being bewitched with Pleasure, and besotted with Vice, which engageth them to take part so furiously with them ; from their malignity, and spite against that which crosseth their fond Humours and exorbitant Lusts ; from their Pride which swelleth against those, who by contrary Practice dissent from their Folly, and reprove their Wickedness, and eclipse their Repute ; from their Envy which repineth at thy appearing better and happier than themselves, thy excelling them in true Worth, thy enjoying that Satisfaction which they want, thy attaining that blessed Hope, to which they cannot aspire ; and seeing that their Reproaches do issue from such Principles, wilt thou regard them ?

Are their Words any Slander, who being professed Enemies of Goodness, do naturally impugn it by the readiest Arms they have, a virulent and petulant Tongue ?

Οὐδέ τις παύλας τῶς σπουδαίους ἐπαινεῖν ἠπορεύεται. Iliad. Pelus. Ep. 2. 220.

Can their dirty Language, bespattering good things, alter their Nature, or render that dishonourable and odious, which in it self is most excellent, most amiable, most useful and profitable ?

(Οὐ γὰρ δοκεῖν ἀέρις ἐστὶν, ἀλλ' εἶναι θεῖον. Τὸ δοκεῖν ἐστὶν πρὸς ἡμᾶς, ὡς αὖτε ἐστὶν ἀναρ ἀνθρώπων. Greg. Naz. Orat.—de sede Const.) Ant. 8. §. 1.

Is it not indeed a Commendation of Vertue, which should encourage us the more to like it, to honour it, to embrace it, that vain, wild, dissolute Persons, distemper'd in their Minds, notoriously void of Discretion, of Integrity, of Sobriety, do pretend to vilify and disgrace it ?

Malis displicere laudari est. Sen. Excerpt. (p. 690.)

Non potest bonus non esse, qui bonis placeat ; nec minus validum argumentum mihi videtur, quod bonus sit si malis displiceat. Bern. Ep. 248.

Ἀφ᾽ ἑσέως. 1 Pet. 2. 15.

Ἀποποι. 2 Thess. 3. 2.

As their Commendation is of no worth, so their Reproach is less considerable.

Ant. 3. §. 4.

Dost thou not disparage thine own Judgment by heeding theirs, or suffering it to be of any Consideration with thee in the Conduct of thy Life ?

Quanta dementia est vereri tibi infamem ab infamibus ? Sen. Ep. 91.

.. Dost thou take them to be serious in this, or to speak in good earnest, when they reproach Vertue, and slight the plain Dictates of Reason, the clear Light of natural Conscience, the express Commands of God, the apparent Concerns of their own Soul ? They who are sober in nothing, how can they be serious in this ? Why should they seem judicious in such a Case ?

Moveret si judicio hoc fecerunt, nunc morbo faciunt. Sen. Exc.

Is it not evidently better to be slandered by giddy, leud, ungodly Wretches, who mind not what they say, nor care what they do, whose Judgment therefore can signify nothing ; than really to deserve reproof ; and thence certainly to incur Blame from all staid, sober, considerate, wise and vertuous Persons, who judge advisedly and uprightly about Things ?

Ego cum à nostro Catone laudabar, vel reprehendi me à cæteris facile patiebar. Cic. de Orat.

Is it not better to undergo their severest Censure, and most biting Scoffs, than to be condemned of Folly and Baseness by thy own Mind, and reviled by thy own Conscience ?

Is it not infinitely better to be unjustly defamed by Men, than to be disreputed by God, exposed to most disgraceful Condemnation at his Bar, and thrown into that State of everlasting Ignominy ?

Tu ergo plus opprobria times quam tormenta? Sc. Bern. Ep. 108.
Matt. 25. 41.

Æquissimo animo ad honestum consilium per mediam infamiam tendam, Sc.
Sen. Ep. 81.

Non vis esse justus sine gloria? at mercede saepe justus esse debebis cum infamia. Sen. Ep. 113.
Ant. 5. §. 3. 11. 16. 9. 18.

Is it not more tolerable to hear such Language, than having violated our Duty, and broken God's Commands, one Day to hear that dismal Sentence, *Go ye cursed into everlasting Fire?*

It is a glorious Infamy, which one sustaineth for the Sake of Righteousness.

Even *Heathens*, with whom Glory was the *most ample Reward*, and sweetest *fruit of Vertue*, yet do injoin that we should prefer Conscience before it; and that we should rather gladly embrace Infamy, than forsake Vertue.

It is the Lot of all good Men (for Probation, Exercise and Improvement of their Vertue to be persecuted) at least in some times, as when St. Paul said, *All that will live godly in Christ Jesus must suffer Persecution*; And surely he that sincerely loveth God, would even desire Occasion of suffering somewhat for his Sake, in Testimony of his faithful Affection: But what more tolerable Persecution, what more easie Martyrdom could we wish, than to be lashed by a scurrilous Tongue; or rather to observe the Ears of others to be infested with the Buzzes of Detraction? What is this but a little Air stirred in vain, but a mere sound or blast of Wind, importing nought to him that doth not mind it, or will not be affected with it? The which surely to a sound Heart and pure Conscience cannot be very sensible; a Man must have a froward Temper, or a tender Ear, whom a little such creaking, or grating noise doth much vex; all its force is broken, all its Mischief is remedied easily, by Neglect or Contempt.

Quid stultius homine verba metuente?
Sen. Ep. 91.

It is in a manner more commendable to suffer for being Good, than for being a Christian; a truer Martyrdom to suffer for the Temper than for the Name of *Christ*; for doing well, than for professing Truth.

Who indeed had ever been good in any notable Degree, if some had minded the Opinion, or the Discourse of such Men, whom in all times the great Adversary of Goodness and Maligner of our Welfare hath excited to deter Men from Vertue by thus abusing it? Hath it not ever been the Portion of good Men to suffer in this kind?

Jer. 20. 7.
Psal. 44. 16, 17. 57. 3. 4. 119.
51. 69. 10.
Job 12. 4. Sap. 5. 3.

Ἐμπαιγμῶν καὶ μαστῶν πείραν ἔλαβον.
Heb. 11. 36.
* Heb. 12. 3. Ἀναλογισαδὲς
2 Cor. 6. 8. Διὰ δόξης, καὶ ἀτιμίας.

Was not * our Lord himself, were not his *Apostles*, were not all the *Prophets* of old, were not all the *Heroes* in Goodness of all times thus pursued with Obloquy? What vile Imputation, what Name of Reproach can be devised, wherewith the spiteful World did not besmear them?

Yet were they much disturbed at it, were they any-wise discouraged or scared by it from their Duty? No; they rather did find Satisfaction and Delight in it; it rather did heighten their Mind, and strengthen their Resolution; it begat a gallant, and triumphant Disdain of such Injuries, enlivening and animating them in their carrier of Duty; they did embrace Reproach for Righteousness not only with content, as their proper Lot and Portion from God's Providence, but with Joy, as their special Glory and Happiness, from divine Goodness; feeling it most true, what our Master taught, *Blessed are ye, when Men shall revile you, and shall say all manner of Evil against you falsely for my sake: Blessed are ye, when Men—shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil for the Son of Man's sake*; and according to St. Peter, *εἰ ὀνειδίζετε, ἡ γὰρ ὑμεῖς ὑπὲρ τοῦ ὀνόματος τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἁγιάζεσθε*, if ye be reproached for the Name of Christ (that is, for conscientiously discharging any Christian Duty) happy are ye, for the Spirit of Glory and of God resteth on you; on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified.

Acts 5. 41.
2 Cor. 12. 10.
Ἐὐδοκῶ ἐν ὑβρεσίν—
Matt. 5. 11.
Luke 6. 22.
1 Pet. 4. 14.

In fine, it is all Reason, and it is the express Command of God, that in such Cases we should not regard the Censures, or the Reproaches of any Mortal: It is a Part of our Duty to despise Obloquy, to expose and lose Reputation for God's sake. Isa. 51. 7. 8. For Hearken (saith he) unto me ye that know Righteousness, the people in whose heart is my Law; fear ye not the Reproach of Men, neither be ye afraid of their Revilings; for the Moth shall eat them up like a Garment, and the Worm shall eat them like Wood: but my Righteousness shall be for ever, and my Salvation from Generation to Generation.

5. Men commonly decline the publick Practice of Duty out of Affectation, thereby to be deemed more honest and sincere, or to decline the Suspicion of being Hypocritical.

As this is the most obvious and usual Calumny wherewith dissolute People do charge good Men; so to Men of generous Dispositions, it is of all Censures most poignant,

painant, as most crossing their Temper, according to which as they hate to be, so they can hardly endure to be counted or called Dissemblers; whence often they chuse rather to seem indifferent to Goodness, than zealously affected to it: they rather wave some Points of Duty, than for the Performance of them expose themselves to that Imputation.

But this Proceeding is very unreasonable. For,

What can be more absurd, than to be really and notoriously bad (as whoever omitteth his Duty is) to prevent a surmise of being such? Or to be truly worse than we should be, that we may not be deemed worse than we seem?

How can we more gratifie the Enemy of our Salvation, than by approving our selves in Truth to be what he would falsly challenge us to be, Mockers of God, and Traitors to our own Soul?

Is it not a vain Thing to regard that kind of Censure, which it is impossible for any Man to escape, upon other Terms than of being very naughty? For wicked Men will never fail to load those with this Charge who will not comply with their Follies, and *run with them to the same excess of riot*, or are any-wise better than themselves; it is inevitable for a staunch Man not to be stigmatized for a Hypocrite by them. 1 Pet. 4. 4.

We have certainly more reason to be satisfied with the sure Conscience and Sense of our own Integrity, than to be moved with the presumptuous Assertions of any Wretch devoid of Justice or Charity: His Censure being plainly Injurious, and contrary to all Rules of Equity, which prescribe that no Man should judge of things unknown, or uncertain, is utterly despicable. 2 Cor. 1. 12.
1 John 3. 21.

The Testimony of God (*who is greater than our Hearts*) perfectly knowing our Sincerity, may abundantly support us; it is a great wrong to him for us to value the rash Suspicions of Men, when we are secure of his Knowledge, who *seeth all our Works, and trieth our Hearts*; who hath said, that *if we commit our way to him, and trust in him, he will bring forth our Righteousness as the Light, and our Judgment as the Noon-day*. 1 John 3. 20.
1 Thess. 2. 4.
Gal. 1. 10.
Col. 3. 23.
Eph. 6. 5.
1 Cor. 4. 4.
Psalm. 37. 4.

It is certainly better to be called Hypocrite by Men for doing our Duty, than to be treated as a Hypocrite by God for neglecting it; for all those who upon any Account do violate God's Laws; shall *have their Portion with the Hypocrites*, in that disconsolate Place, *where is weeping and gnashing of Teeth*. And good reason; for indeed by thus avoiding Hypocrisy, we really do incur it; by seeking to preserve an Opinion of Sincerity, we forfeit the reality of it; by the Practice of disavowing the Fear of God, and Care of Goodness, we do constitute our selves certain Hypocrites, and Impostors; dissembling our Thoughts, smothering our Conscience, deluding our Neighbours with false Conceits of us, feigning that Indifference which we have not, pretending to act without regret or remorse, which we can not do; seeming otherwise than we are, signifying otherwise than we mean, doing otherwise than we judge fit, or like to do; that is, if we be not stark Infidels, or utterly void of Conscience. Matt. 24. 51.

This is Hypocrisy turned the wrong side outward, disguising a Man in a fouler Shape, and uglier Garb, than that which is natural and true.

And if we compare the two Hypocrisies, (that of pretending Conscience, which we want, and this of denying Conscience, which we have; that of seeming better than we are, this of seeming worse than we may be) this in nature may well seem more vile, in tendency more dangerous, in effect more mischievous than the other.

There is in both the same Falshood, the same Prevarication, the like Contempt and Abuse of God; but the Hypocrite of whom we speak doth worse things, more directly wrongful to God, more prejudicial to Goodness, more harmful to the World.

The specious Hypocrite counterfeiting Goodness, and *having a Form of Godliness, without the Power and Reality of it*, doth yield to God some Part (the exterior Part) of his due Honour and Respect; but the sneaking Hypocrite, disowning Goodness, doth apparently desert, slight and affront God; the one serveth God with his Face, and his Voice, though *his Heart be far from him*; the other doth not so much as sacrifice a Carcass of Obedience to him; That may bring some Credit and Advantage to Goodness, strengthen its Interest by his Vote and Countenance; this by not avowing it doth assuredly weaken its Reputation and Cause; that Hypocrisy, as such is a private and single Evil, whereby a Man doth indeed prejudice himself, but doth not injure his Neighbour, yea may edifie him by the appearing (which

(which in this Respect is the same with the real) Goodness of his Example ; but this Hypocrisy is a general Mischief, a scandalous Evil, a contagious Pestilence, whereby a Man not only harmeth himself, but wrongeth many others, seducing them into Dissoluteness, infecting the World with base Indifference to Good, and easiness to comply with Sin.

It is indeed a sad Thing, that God and Goodness should be deserted upon this Account ; that most Men should be so uncharitable, so unjust, so imprudent as to suspect all good Men of Hypocrisy ; as if it were incredible that any Man should heartily love or fear God ; (when it is rather strange that any Man should do otherwise) that any Man in good earnest, or otherwise than in Pretence and for sinister Respects should embrace Vertue (when it is marvellous, that a reasonable Man should decline it) that so many of themselves inclinable to Goodness, should be so weak as to be deterr'd from it by so vain an Apprehension ; and that the Name of Hypocrisy should drive away Piety ; that it should become desirable, that Hypocrites might abound in the World, lest Religion both in truth and shew should be discarded.

In fine, we may otherwise suppress this odious Imputation, than by deserting Goodness ; we may demonstrate our selves serious and sincere by an inflexible adherence to it, in the continual Tenour of our Practice ; and especially in some instances of Duty, which are hardly consistent with Hypocrisy, for no Man can hold long in a strained Posture ; no Man will take much Pains, or encounter great Difficulties, or sustain grievous Hardships and Afflictions, cross his Apperites, forego Gains, and Honours, for that which he doth not heartily like and love ; he
 Matt. 23. 23. may counterfeit in Ceremonies and Formalities, but he will hardly feign Humility, Meekness, Patience, Contentedness, Temperance, at least uniformly and constantly. Even the Patient enduring this Censure will confute it, and wipe off the Aspersions of Hypocrisy.

SERMON XXXV.

Provide Things Honest in the Sight of all MEN.

2 COR. VIII. 21.

*Providing for honest things not only in the sight of the Lord, but in
the sight of Men.*

6. **A** Nother great Impediment of good Conversation before Men, is a Desire of seeming courteous and civil ; Men usually conform to sinful Practices, because they would not be held Clowns, rude and distastful in Conversation ; they would not give Offence to their Company, by clashing with their Humour ; by preferring their own Judgment, and seeming to be in their own Conceit wiser and better than those with whom they converse ; by provoking them to think they are held Fools or worse by such Non-compliance.

This is an ordinary Snare to easie and ingenuous Natures ; but the Ground of it is very unreasonable : For although in Matters of Indifference, where Duty and Sin do not fall into Consideration, to be limber and ductile as can be (which is the Temper of the best Metal) to have no Humour of our own, or to resign up all our Humour to the Will of our Company, to condescend unto, and comport
 with

with any thing ; to raise no Faction or Debate, but presently to yield to the swaying Vote ; to *become all things to all men* in a ready Complaisance, be Wisdom and good Manners, doth argue good Nature, good Understanding, good Breeding ; is a rightly gentile and obliging Quality.

Yet where Duty is concerned, where Sinning or not Sinning is the Case, there Courtesy hath no room ; there it is vain to pretend any Engagement to Complaisance.

For surely it is better to be held uncivil, than to be ungodly ; it is far better Manners to offend any number of Men, than to be rude with God, to clash with his Pleasure, to offer Indignity and Injury to him ; there can be no Competition in the Case ; no shadow of Reason, why we should displease God to please Men.

As it were more civil to offend ten thousand Boors (Peasants) than to affront our King ; so to offend ten thousand Kings than to affront our God were in Policy more adviseable, and in Equity more justifiable ; so the Royal Psalmist did judge ; for *Princes* (said he) *did sit and speak against me, but thy Servant did meditate in thy Statutes* ; Psal. 119. 23. Matt. 10. 18. so *Moses*, so *Samuel*, so *Elias*, so *Jeremy*, so *Daniel*, so the three noble Children, so the holy Apostles did conceive ; who being Persons otherwise very courteous and gentle ; yet had not that Consideration of mighty Princes, as not rather to approve their Consciences to God, than to comply with their Pleasure : How much less should we upon pretence of Courtesy toward inferiour Persons, in ordinary Conversation transgress our Duty ?

Our own Interest in such Cases is too considerable to be sacrificed to the Conceit or Pleasure of any Men ; Our Salvation is no Matter, wherein Formality of Respect should intervene, or have any Weight ; to gain or forfeit our eternal Happiness, is no Business of Complement or Ceremony : It were a silly Courtesy for a Man to wait on his Company to Hell ; a wild Point of Gallantry, to be damned in Complaisance.

Who would take himself to be obliged in good Manners to hold on the round in a Cup of Poison ; to leap down after those, who from blind Inadvertency, or wilful Perverseness tumble into a Gulf, to gash or stab himself in Conformity to some desperate Folk ? Much less can a Man be engaged out of any such regard (in compliance with the mistake, weakness, or pravity of others) to incur Guilt, to provoke divine Wrath, to expose his Soul to utter ruin, to undergo a Damage, for which all the World cannot make any Reparation or Amends ?

Is it not far better to disgust, than to gratify those, who have so little Consideration of our Welfare ; who indeed are very discourteous and heinously rude, in offering to tempt us unto Sin, to desire a compliance therein with them ; to expect from us, that we should adventure so much for their vain Satisfaction ?

Indeed, to gratify such Persons, were great and noble Courtesy ; but really to do it, we should not go this way ; for this is a spurious Courtesy, rather Conspiracy and Treachery, than Courtesy.

It is in Truth, at the Bottom, great Discourtesy (involving much Unkindness, real Abuse, unmerciful Inhumanity and Cruelty) to second, to countenance, to support or encourage any Man in doing that which manifestly tendeth unto his great Prejudice, to his utter Bane.

It is the truest Civility (implying real Humanity, genuine Charity, faithful Kindness, and tender Pity) to stand off in such Cases, and by refusing (in a modest, gentle, discreet manner refusing) to concur in Sin with our Friends and Companions, to check them, to warn them, to endeavour their amendment and retreat from pernicious Courses ; to exercise that *Compassion* toward them, which *St. Jude* calleth, *pulling them out of the fire*. Jud. 22, 23.

In such Cases to repel them, yea to reprove them, is the greatest Favour we can shew them ; it is not only safe for our selves, but kind to them to observe *St. Paul's* Precept, *Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them* ; for which Deportment whenever they come to themselves, and soberly reflect on things, they will thank and bless us ; and it will happen, as the *Wiseman* saith, *He that rebuketh a man, afterward shall find more favour than he that flattereth with his tongue*. Eph. 5. 1, 7. Prov. 28. 23.

In fine, if we thoroughly scan the Business, we shall find, that commonly it is not abundance of Courtesy, but a defect of Charity, or of Conscience, or of Courage,

rage, which disposeth us to reservedness, or to Concurrence upon such Occasions, in regard to unallowable Practices.

7. Another Snare which catcheth and holdeth us in open Practice of Sin, or Neglect of Duty, is deference to the Opinion, Authority, Custom, or Example of others; to the common Opinion, to the Authority of great and leading Persons, to the fashion of the World, and prevalent Humour of the Age.

A Man (not consulting or not confiding in his own reason) is apt to credit the Vogue, to defer a kind of Veneration to the general Sentiments of Men (especially of Men qualified) apprehending that allowable or tolerable, which Men commonly by their Practice seem to approve. He is prone to suspect his own Judgment of mistake, when it doth thwart the Opinion of so many; and hardly can have the Heart to oppose his single Apprehensions against so common Notions.

The commonness of Sin, and multitude of Offenders, doth in a manner authorize and warrant it, doth at least seem to excuse and extenuate it.

A Man easily conceiteth himself safe enough, while he is in the Herd, while he walketh in the Road, when he hath the broad coverlet of general Usage to shroud him from Blame: He doth at least fancy Consolation in undergoing a Doom with so many.

But upon many Accompts, this is a very fallacious and dangerous ground of Practice.

For Multitudes are no good Authors of Opinion, or Guides of Practice.

Wise Men have ever been apt to suspect that to be bad, which is most commonly admired and affected.

Nothing is more vulgarly noted, than the injudiciousness, the blindness, the levity, temerity, and giddiness of the Vulgar; temper, inclination, appetite, interest, and the like perverting Biasses have most sway on them; any specious appearance, any slight motive, any light rumour doth serve to persuade them any thing, to drive them any whither.

All Ages have deplored the paucity of wise and good Men; the genuine Disciples of our Lord, and *sons of wisdom*, have ever been *pauillus grex*, a small flock: Our Lord hath told us, that *wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat*.

Wherefore popular Use is no good Argument of Truth or Right; nor can yield any Warrant, or any colour for infringing God's Law: No *Plebiscitum* can be of Force against it.

God never did allow the People to exempt themselves or us from their Loyalty, or Obedience to his Laws; they are universally obligatory; he hath commanded all *men to repent*; he hath threatened that otherwise *all shall perish*; and that *tribulation and anguish shall be upon every soul of man that doeth evil*.

He by exprefs Prohibitions hath obviated all such Pretences and Pleas; *Thou shalt not* (saith he) *follow a multitude to do evil*; and, *Say ye not a Confederacy*—*neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid*, (fear not to dissent and discontinue from the way of this people.) And, *If sinners entice thee*, (how many soever they be, though it be a *sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evil doers*) *consent thou not*.

Indeed if we consider it, it is so far from excusing Sin, that it is an Aggravation thereof, that we therein conspire with others, and the more the worse: To oppose God singly, is not quite so criminal, as to join with a Rout in hostility and rebellion against him; for hereby God's Authority is more shaken, and his Honour more rudely violated; hereby we do not only sin our selves, but contribute to the Sin of others, encourage them to it, and uphold them in it by our Patronage.

Hereby we become accessary to the Degeneracy and general Apostasy of the Age.

Hereby we do join our forces to pull down God's Judgments on our Country, and by promoting general Corruption, induce general Vengeance.

The Multitude of Sinners is so far from sheltering any one from Wrath, that it surely draweth it upon all; forcing the Almighty not only for the Assertion of his own Authority, and Vindication of his Honour; but for the Good of the People, and *purgation of the World*, to pour forth remarkable Vengeance.

For

—illos
Defendit nu-
merus.
Juv. Sat. 12.
46.
Eccclus. 16.17.

Ant. 9. §. 18.
11. §. 4. §. 3.
Argumentum
pessimi turba.
Sen. de Vit.
B. 2.

Matt. 7. 13.
Luke 13. 24.
Rom. 9. 27.
Ila. 18. 22.

Acts 17. 30.
Luke 13. 3.
Rom. 9. 12.
Rom. 2. 9.

Exod. 23. 2.
Rom. 12. 2.

Isa. 8. 11.
1 John 2. 15.
Isa. 8. 10.

Prov. 1. 10.
Isa. 1. 4.

Isa. 1. 25.
I will purge
away the
dross,

For Example : In the time of *Noah* did God spare the old world when all flesh had corrupted its way upon the earth, did that stave off God's Wrath, or stop the Deluge ? No, it did grievously provoke him, it did in a manner necessitate him to destroy man from the face of the earth ; bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly. Gen. 6. 12. 2 Pet. 2. 5. Gen. 6. 6. 2 Pet. 2. 5.

Did the number of Sinners in *Sodom* prevent Vengeance on them ? Was it not that which did condemn them to an overthrow so dismal, pulling down Fire and Brimstone on them ? 2 Pet. 2. 6.

What was the reason of that woeful Captivity, into which *Israel* was carried ? Was it not because they were all grievous revolters, and had so generally conspired in Wickedness, that the Prophet could say, *Run ye to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem, and see now and know, and seek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find a man ; if there be any that executeth judgment, that seeketh the truth, and I will pardon it ?* Was it not this which did wring from God that Sentence, *Shall I not visit for these things ? shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this ?* Jer. 6. 28. Jer. 5. 1. Jer. 5. 29.

When the Case is such in any Community, as it was in *Israel*, when God said, *From the sole of the foot even to the head there is no soundness in it*, then Judgment is necessary, and it must assuredly follow, *Your Country is desolate* — Then God, his Patience being tired, and his Goodness unsupportably abused, will cry out, *Ah, I will ease me of my adversaries, and avenge me of mine enemies.* Isa. 1. 6. Isa. 1. 7.

God, as Governour of the World, in discharge of his Office, for clearing his Honour, for assuring his Majesty, out of regard to publick Good, for the Safety and Welfare of his Subjects, is concerned to chastise notorious, scandalous, and infectious Sin : He may reserve private Sins for the final Doom, when the hidden things of darkness shall be brought to light, and the counsels of hearts manifested, and all Things shall receive just award and recompence ; but it is expedient to punish publick Sins publickly : They who declare their Sin as *Sodom*, with outrageous Impudence, are like to find a Punishment like that in a common Vengeance. 1 Cor. 4. 15. Isa. 3. 9.

We should therefore in such a Case be the more careful of our Conversation, more shy of sinful Compliance with others, for preventing publick Calamity ; for that our single Piety and Innocence (or the Goodness of a few) may save our Country, together with our selves, from Wrath and Ruin ; seeing it is the gracious Method of God, in regard to a few righteous Men, to spare the rest ; to release a Nation from deserved Punishment ; for if in *Sodom* had been found ten righteous Persons, it had escaped that horrible Destruction ; And *Israel* in *Hezekiah's* Time (although in a very great and general Corruption of that Age) by a few good Men did avoid the like Doom ; according to that of the Prophet, *Except the Lord of Hosts, had left unto us a very small remnant, we should have been as Sodom.* Gen. 18. 32. Isa. 1. 9. Lam. 3. 22.

The Righteousness of one *Noah* did save the Race of Mankind from being extinct.

The Zeal of one *Phinehas* did stop that Plague, which had devoured *Israel* ; *Phinehas* (said God himself) *the Son of Eleazar hath turned my wrath away from the children of Israel ; while he was zealous for my sake among them, that I consumed not the children of Israel in my jealousy.* Num. 25. 11. Psal. 106. 30.

If there had been such another publick Patron of Piety, at the time when *Israel* was so severely punished by Deliverance into Captivity, it would have obstructed that lamentable Event : God himself so testified ; for, *I sought* (said he) *for a Man among them, that would make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it ; but I found none ; therefore have I poured out mine Indignation upon them* — and, *Run ye to and fro* — (said he again) *Seek* — *if ye can find a man — in Jerusalem — and I will pardon it.* Ezek. 22. 30. Jer. 5. 1.

Wherefore beside regard to our own Welfare, a Consideration of publick Good, Charity toward the World, a Compassion of our Country should withhold us from conspiring in common Transgressions, or Omissions of Duty.

If we sin with all, we must suffer with all ; nor will the having so much Company in Suffering yield any true Comfort to us ; *Socios habuisse doloris* (to have Companions in Sorrow) is in it self a pitiful Solace, and an unworthy one, favouring of inhuman Malignity ; for our Fellows will bear no share with us, or take off any thing from the Burthen of our Pains, which will be equally to them and us extreme. God will not oversee us. Eccles. 16. 17.

Can it be any considerable Satisfaction, that we are Sick of an epidemical Disease, that sweepeth away multitudes about us and with us?

Is it better for one Part, that the whole Body is overspread with a noisom Leprosie? That its Fellow-members are tortured with grievous Anguish?

Can the forest Pains of our Brethren cure the Akins of our Heart, assuage the Pangs of our Conscience, or slack the consuming Flames beneath?

What Advantage can we enjoy from going down to Hell in a Troop? What Ease shall we find there from being encompassed with the doleful Groans, the piercing Shrieks, and dismal Howlings of Follow-sufferers in that infernal Dungeon?

Alas! will it not rather augment our Pains, to hear the fore Complaints, the fierce Accusations, the desperate Curses of those, whom our Compliance hath engaged, or encouraged, or confirmed and hardened in that wicked Practice, which did throw them into that disconsolate Case?

8. Another Principle (near of kin to the former) is a Dislike of Singularity, and Solitude; together with the Consequences and Imputations usually cleaving thereto.

One would not be a Man by himself; to be gazed on, to be hooted at as a kind of Prodigy, to be deemed an extravagant, odd, humourous, fantastick Person, conceited of his own Opinion, addicted to his own way, arrogating to himself a liberty of crossing and condemning, or condemning the World; therefore he runneth along with the Age, complying with its sinful Customs, and naughty Fashions.

He is grievous unto us even to behold; for his life is not like other mens, his ways are of another fashion. Sap. 2. 15, &c.

But this is a vain Principle; for really to be singular is no Fault, to be held so is no Disgrace; it is rather in many Cases laudable and honourable; and if in any most reasonable, 'tis in this.

Doth not Singularity, or Paucity, increase the Price and Estimation of every valuable Thing? What maketh a Jewel, but Rarity? What but that maketh a Diamond more precious than a Pebble?

Do not Men for singular Eminency in any Art, Skill, Faculty, Endowment, gain Credit and Renown? What recommended to Posterity the Names of *Apelles*, *Praxiteles*, *Phidias*, but excelling in their Art beyond the ordinary Rate? What gave to *Demosthenes* and *Cicero* their Esteem, but a singular Knack of Eloquence? To what did *Alexander* and *Cæsar* owe their Fame, but to an extraordinary Valour? Whence got *Socrates* such a Name, but from his singular Wisdom? Whence *Fabricius*, *Aristides*, *Cato*, but from their singular Integrity?

Why then should it be a Discouragement or Reproach to be singular or extraordinary in the noblest of all Faculties, that of living well, in the most excellent of all Perfections, that of Vertue?

In Truth a Man is hardly capable of a greater Commendation than this, that he is singularly good; that he surpasseth the vulgar Level, and mounteth near Heaven in the divinest Qualities; that no bad Example or Fashion hath been able to seduce or corrupt him; this should render him to be most highly esteemed, and most dearly cherished, as a choice Ornament of the World, as a most useful Instrument of good to Mankind.

It were desirable that Vertue were more common in the World, but surely its being more rare doth render it more admirable, more illustrious, more glorious.

Heroical Vertue is therefore such, because so few do attain, or can reach it;

—pauci quos æquus amavit
Jupiter, —

A few, who by special Assistance of God's Grace, and by extraordinary Resolution, do surmount the Obstacles which are set against it.

Inter bonos bonus esse salutem habet, inter malos verò & laudem; illud tantæ facilitatis est, quantæ securitatis; hoc tantæ virtutis, quantæ & difficultatis.
Bern. Ep. 25.

It was well said of St. Bernard, *To be good among good men hath safety; but to be such among bad men hath also praise;* (a Man will be saved by that, but he should be commended for this) *that hath as much facility as it hath security, this is of as much worth as difficulty.*

Indeed

Indeed if we consider the Nature of Things, or consult the History of Times, we shall find that Vertue must be, and ever hath been liable to this Imputation; it is commonly so hard and hazardous to be good in any notable Degree, that few will take the Pains, or undergo the Hardships requisite to attain or exercise it.

Hence the best Men, (who are such not according to the blind Conjecture of Men, but in God's sure Esteem) are an elect, and peculiar sort of People; a few ^{1 Pet. 2. 9.} choice Persons cull'd out of a great Lump of those, who either reject Religion, or embrace it only in verbal Profession, or formal Shew.

Hence it hath been the Observation, and Complaint of all Times,

Rari quippe boni. ———

Juv. Sat. 13.
28.

Hence the most renowned Men for Goodness, and who by God's special Care have been recommended to us as Patterns thereof, have been very singular in it; and their Singularity did much enhance the Price of their Goodness.

It is said of *Enoch*, that *he walked with God*; but it seemeth with small, or no ^{Gen. 5. 22.} Company beside; otherwise it would not have been so particularly recorded of him.

Noah was content to be a Man by himself, *a preacher of righteousness* against the Vogue, and a Practicer thereof against the Stream of his whole Age; for, *thee* (said God of him, that is, thee alone) *have I seen righteous before me in this generation*: He was no less singular in his Goodness, than in his Salvation. ^{Gen. 7. 1.}

Abraham had no common Qualities, which moved God to pick him out, and separate him from the rest of Mankind (to single him from his kindred and country) ^{Gen. 12. 1.} to confer special Graces and Blessings on him.

Lot had *his righteous soul vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked*, which did ^{2 Pet. 2. 7.} enclose him; yet so that he did retain a sound and clear Integrity among them.

Job had this Testimony from God, examining *Satan* concerning him, *Hast thou* ^{Job 1. 3.} *considered my servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth; a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?*

What was the Resolution of *Joshua*? Did he value being sole or singular in his Practice? No, for propounding to his People whether they would chuse God or not, he told them, that however it were, although all of them should forsake God, he was resolved to stick fast to him, not regarding their Practice; But (said he) *as for me and my house we will serve the Lord*; that indeed was nobly resolved; it ^{Josh. 24. 15.} was a Resolution worthy of such an *Heroe*, to stand alone in so good and wise a Choice against his whole Nation. It was a Resolution suitable to that his Behaviour, which he expressed in these Words, *My brethren that went up with me made* ^{Josh. 14. 8.} *the heart of the people melt; but I wholly followed the Lord my God*; in regard to which his Camerado *Caleb*, being of the same Spirit with him, is called a Man of another ^{Num. 14. 24.} spirit; different from, and above the mean Spirit of his Fellows.

What was *David*? Was he not a Man by himself? Was he not like one, of whom the Poet saith,

*Egregium sanctumque virum si cerno, bimembri
Hoc monstrum puero, vel facta comparo mula.*

Juv. Sat. 13.

So he telleth us, *I* (saith he) *am become as it were a * monster unto many, but my sure trust is in thee.*

*A Wonder. N. Tr. Psal. 71. 7. 119. 51.
1 Pet. Ἐν ᾧ ἐβρίχ.

Did *Elias*, to shun the Imputation of Singularity, or in regard to common Practice, swerve from his faithful adherence to God's Service; although he did passionately resent and bewail his Case? No; for, *I have*, said he, *been very jealous* ^{1 Kings 19. 10.} *for the Lord of hosts; for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only am left, and they seek my life to take it away.*

What was the Case of *Jeremy*? *I* (saith he) *was a derision to all my people, and* ^{Lam. 3. 14.} *their song all the day; yet did he maintain his Integrity, and was a defenced city, and an iron pillar, and a brazen wall against the whole land; against the kings of Judah,* ^{Jer. 1. 18.} *against the princes thereof, and against the people of the land.* <sup>Murus abene-
us.</sup>

What was the Condition of our Lord? Was not he *σημεῖον ἀντιλεγόμενον*, a pro- ^{Luke 2. 34.} digy spoken against by all, against whom both *Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gen-* ^{Heb. 12. 3.} *tiles,*

Acts 4. 27. *tiles, and the people of Israel were gathered together; who trod the wine-press alone, and*
 Isa. 63. 3. *of the people there was none with him; who in his Life was regarded by few, and at*
 John 12. 37. *his Death (when he yielded his great Attestation to Truth and Righteousness) was*
 John 16. 32. *deserted by all?*
 Matt. 26. 31.

56. What was the *Apostles Condition*? Were they not singular Men? Were not they
 Acts 28. 22. held a *Sect, every where spoken against*, and impugned with all violence of Spirit and
 2 Cor. 4. 9. Rage? Were not they *made a spectacle to the World*, to be gazed at with scorn and
 Heb. 10. 33. reproach? Did not they (a few, simple, poor, weak folk) in Doctrine and Practice
 1 Cor. 1. 26. cross and controul the World, confuting, reproving, condemning the generality
 of Men, of Errour, of Folly, of Wickedness?

It can therefore be no just Blame, or reasonable Discouragement to appear singular in the Practice of Vertue.

Such a Singularity is no good Argument of fond Conceitedness, of wilful Humour, of arrogant Pride. For,

Can it be fond Conceitedness to follow the Dictates of the best Reason, to observe the Advices of the wisest Men in all times, to follow the Direction and Conduct of infinite Wisdom, to embrace that which in most Cases natural Light, common Sense, and continual Experience do approve? Is it not wildness to do otherwise, though all should do it?

Can it be wilful Humour to hold fast our best Interest, our truest Comfort, our eternal Salvation? Is it not rather so, to comply with a *perverse generation*, in running headlong to their own Ruin?

Can it be Pride or Arrogance, to acknowledge our Maker; to be Loyal and Dutiful to our heavenly Sovereign; to fear the Almighty God, to submit to his will, to *tremble at his word*, to be afraid of his Judgments, to shun his fierce Anger and severe Vengeance?

Is it a bad Ambition to seek that Honour and immortal Glory, which God doth offer; to shun that everlasting Shame and Contempt, which he doth menace?

Is it not rather monstrous Presumption, and enormous Vanity, to consort and conspire with Rebels against God's Law, with Despisers of his Grace?

In fine, when the most Men are foolish and vain, when the World is depraved and dissolute, it is necessary that the best Reason should be called humour, and the wisest Men should be deemed extravagant; that the best things should be flighted, and the best Persons represented with odious Characters: But hence to renounce Wisdom and Goodness is abominably absurd; as if we should therefore put out our Light, because it is Night about us; or in deep Winter should put off our Cloaths among the wild *Indians*.

9. Of Affinity to the foregoing Principles is this most plausible Apology for smothering our Conscience, namely, a prudential Apprehension, that we shall not come off well in openly avowing and abetting Goodness, so as to do any good, or service to it thereby; but shall thereby rather work prejudice and disservice to it.

The Age (will such a wise Man say) is incorrigibly degenerate; Wickedness is not only bold and impudent, but even outrageously insolent; so that to appear strictly good, is a kind of Scandal; to pretend Conscience for our Rule of Action, is to be ridiculous; to patronize Duty, is to provoke Scorn and Obloquy; to mention Religion, is to prostitute and profane it; to concern God in our doing, is to expose his most sacred and venerable Name to Irrision and foul Abuse.

Such is the Posture of Things, that of all the Sects and Factions which divide the World, that of *Epicurean* Scorners and Mockers is become the most Formidable; with disdainful Pride insulting and vapouring over the Professors of Religion; Persecuting all soberness of Mind and staunchness of Manners with a fierce Rage, and a kind of Satanick Zeal.

The State of the World being like to that, when the holy Psalmist cried out,
 Psal. 94. 3, 4. *Lord, how long shall the wicked, how long shall the wicked triumph? How long shall they*
 52. 1. 10. 3. *utter and speak hard things, and all the workers of iniquity boast themselves?*

Matt. 7. 6. In such a Case, is it not seasonable to observe our Lord's Advice, *not to give that which is holy unto dogs, nor to cast our pearls before swine*; not to expose good Doctrine, and holy Practice, to scurrilous and sensual People, who will snarl and bark at it, will scorn and trample on it, will bite and tear you for it?

Is it not then Wisdom rather fairly to retreat, withdrawing our Vertue into a safe Retirement, than by openly contesting for it against over-matching Forces, to hazard its being baffled and abused, its being trampled on, and triumphed over, by scornful Pride and Malice?

In such a World to oppose Impiety, what is it but attempting to stop a Torrent, to allay a Storm, to gape against an Oven, to blow against the Wind, to kick against the Pricks?

But if this Case be rightly weighed, it rather strongly may engage us to an open Profession and Practice of the strictest Vertue, than excuse us from it.

St. Paul doth enjoin us *to walk accurately, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, for this reason, because the days are evil; and that we should be blameless and harmless, the sons of God without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse Nation, shining among them as lights in the world; and * holding forth the word of life.* Eph. 5. 15. Phil. 2. 5.

And great Reason for it; for the worse the World is, the more need there is of good Patterns to instruct and guide it, to admonish and excite it to Goodness. * (Or, holding fast, ἐπιτεύχοντες.)

If the Days are evil, it is high time that we should apply our best Endeavours to the mending of them.

If Vertue be so near lost, or so quite gone from among us, it is needful that we should presently seek to recover, or to retrieve it. *Specula juvenis—in ea tempora natus es, quibus formare animum expediat constantibus exemplis.* Tac. Ann. 16.

If Goodness be so hardly pressed by Opposition, then hath every good Man the more Reason to appear strenuously in its defence, the more are we engaged to hasten with all our might to its Relief and Succour from irrecoverable Oppression.

Every one should labour to raise a Bank against that Inundation, which threatneth to overthrow and overwhelm all.

Shall we endure to see the Adversary of our Welfare to carry all before him, without any Opposition or Obstruction? Shall we suffer Iniquity to enjoy a quiet Reign, to root and settle its self in its Usurpation, to raise it self a Title of long Occupancy and Prescription against Goodness?

Is it not then more generous to avow our Friendship to Vertue, and to abet it in our Patronage, when it is under the Hatches, and crieth for our Aid? Is it not vile Treachery in such a Case to desert it?

Is it not gallant then *to resist Sin*, and check wickedness, when it is so high and rampant?

Who will not be Vertuous (or endeavour at least to appear such) when Vertue is in fashion and request; when it flourisheth in reputation, when all the World doth countenance and abet it? Who will not shun or disown wickedness when it is commonly odious and despicable? Who will *not help the Lord against* Jud. 5. 23. weak Adversaries?

But to embrace Vertue upon greatest Disadvantages, to disclaim Vice in its triumphant Prosperity, this is indeed brave and masculine.

He is a worthy Man indeed, who can keep the Field among so many stout Enemies, who can stand upright *in a crooked generation*; who can despise the Scorn, defy the Rage, bear up against the Impudence and Malignity of vain, base, wretched Men, combining to supplant and extirpate Goodness.

Nor have we Reason in proceeding thus to despair of good Success; we need not fear thereby to expose the Credit, or endanger the Interest of Goodness. For,

How can we fail of prospering in the maintenance of God's Cause, and special Concern? Although Men may commonly desert him, yet doth he not utterly forsake them, or give over the Government of the World; he may let the Reins lie a little loose, but he doth not put them out of his Hands; his Power cannot be abated, his Providence can never sleep; though he is so patient in suffering wicked Men to provoke him, yet he will not be *slack* in assisting good Men, who take his Part, and undertake to maintain his Honour; Assuredly he will help them, who *help him against the mighty.*

In this Service *one will chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight*; One David will knock down ever so many Philistines reproaching God's Name; One Phinehas will repress the Petulancy of a whole Nation; One *Jeremy* shall be a *brazen Wall against a whole Land*; God will make it good to such an one, *They shall fight* Deut. 32. 30. Josh. 23. 10. Num. 25. 3.

Jer. 1. 19. 15. fight against thee, but they shall not prevail against thee; for I am with thee, saith the Lord, to deliver thee.

One sober Man, in defence of Vertue, is able to discomfit all the Hectors, the huffing Blades, and boisterous Ruffians in the World; attacking them with sound Discretion, and steady Resolution: For all their Bravery and Confidence, they are easily mated, and being like their Sire, if you resist them, they will flee from you: A prudent, seasonable, smart Check will quash their spurious Courage, and giddy Audacity. Their contempt of Goodness is but feigned; they cannot really for their Hearts despise it; there is stamped on their Souls and Consciences such a respect, such an awe thereof, which they cannot quite race out; wherefore if you briskly represent it to them, and challenge their Reverence to it, they cannot but succumb, their own Mind and Conscience joining to back your Reproof; so that if you cannot reclaim them, you shall however repress them; if you cannot correct their Vice, you shall yet confound their Impudence; For so (saith St. Peter) it is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the Ignorance of foolish Men; and, Having a good Conscience, that whereas they speak evil of you, as of evil-doers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your Conversation in Christ.

Jer. 20. 11.
1 Pet. 2. 15.
Tit. 2. 8.

It is only a sneaking, or a timorous Pretence to Vertue, which they contemn, but they will admire those who stilly adhere to it, and stoutly maintain it.

We shall therefore expose Vertue, not by frankly avowing it, but by faintly flinking from it, when Occasion requireth an open Acknowledgment and exemplary Practice of it.

If the World is so very bad, it will not be worse for our Attempt to better it; it will be so much at least better, that one therein hath that worthy Purpose.

It was bad, when Noah preached Righteousness to it.

It was bad, when Elias was so zealous for the Lord of Hosts.

It was bad, when Jeremy was derided for declaring God's Will, and exhorting to Repentance.

They were bad very times, when all the Prophets did strive so earnestly to reclaim Men from their Wickedness; being reproached and persecuted for doing so, but not deterred from doing it; the Resentment they had of the Badness of Times did not make them abandon the means of its Recovery from it.

John 5. 19. The whole World did lie in wickedness, when the Apostles did undertake the Reformation of it.

None calleth for justice, nor any pleadeth for truth—
Isa. 59. 4.

In fine, if Men generally upon such Accompts of despairing Prudence, neglect to own Goodness: What must the Consequence be? What, but that Piety shall be cashiered, that Vertue shall be discarded, that Conscience shall be quite exploded and exterminated from the World; that consequently an horrible Deluge of various Mischiefs, a general Prevalence of Leudness and Luxury, of Fraud and Violence, of Faction and Tumult; a Violation of all Faith and Friendship, a Dissolution of all Order and Peace will ensue?

Jer. 5. 29.
Isa. 1. 24.
59. 17.

And what must grow upon this State of Things? What but another Flood of of Judgments and woeful Vengeance; when God's Patience hath been tried to the utmost, and his Goodness tired with bearing such a Load of Abominations, he will be forced to cry out, Shall I not visit for these things? Shall not my Soul be avenged on such a Nation as this?

Stulta caliditas, perversè imitata prudentiam, Cic. de Offic. 3. p. 143.

10. Another Principle of dispensing with Conscience in publick Duties, and Conversation before Men, is a kind of perverse Wisdom, or subtile Craft, affecting the Name of Discretion.

Men see there are divers Inconveniences attending the Profession of Respect to God, and Conscience in all their Doings; that the World may dislike and disesteem them, that divers Persons will hate, malign, reproach and persecute them for it; that they may chance to be crossed in their Designs, and lose Profits and Preferments thereby; therefore they deem it adviseable to decline it in open view, making up the Defect by adoring and serving God in private.

Thus they think to salve all, by maintaining a neutrality, and compounding the Business, yielding an open Conformity to the World, and reserving a secret Regard to God; sinning publickly, and privately repenting; retaining their Credit, Quiet, Ease, Pleasure, with their Conscience, and Peace of Mind: Affecting some Piety, but avoiding the Scandal of it.

They

They would hold fair with both Sides, so that neither the World should persecute them for crossing its Humour, nor God punish them for transgressing his Will.

They drive a subtle Trade, hoping to gain on all hands, both the Benefits of the other, and the Advantages of this World; to save their Soul, and serve their Worldly Interest together.

This they would believe a Point of special Wisdom; prescribed by Solomon, *Be not righteous overmuch, neither make thy self over-wise, for why shouldest thou destroy thy self? Be not overmuch wicked, neither be thou foolish, why shouldest thou die before the time?* Eccles. 7. 16; 17.

But this rooking Trick, to hedge thus, and save Stakes, to play fast and loose, to dodge and shuffle with God, God doth not like, nor will suffer himself to be gull'd with it.

He will not be satisfied with such a mungrel, partial, and *halting* Service.

1 Kings 18. 21.

He will not allow us to with-hold that half of his Service (the external, visible Part thereof) which is most honourable to him, and most beneficial to our Neighbour.

He cannot endure a double Heart, a double Face; one looking upward to Heaven, another downward to the Earth.

He exacteth from us an Integrity of Heart, and Perfection of Obedience; that we should love him with our whole Heart, that we should be *perfect with him*, that we should walk uprightly, not *deflecting to the right hand or left* from our Duty.

Psal. 12. 2. Jam. 1. 8. 4. 8.
2 Chron. 12. 33.
1 Tim. 3. 8. *Διγλωσ.*
Psal. 38. 37. *Their heart was not whole with him.* (Old Tr.)
Deut. 18. 13. Job 1. 8.
Psal. 44. 18. 119. 51.
2 Chron. 34. 2. Job 23. 11.
Matt. 6. 24. } *Δυσὶ κυεῖσιν.*
Luke 16. 13. }

He will not endure, that we should hold Amity, or Correspondence with his Enemies; particularly with the World, the Friendship whereof he hath declared inconsistent with his Favour; and that it is a spiritual Adultery to impart any of our Affections to it; according to that of St. James, *Ye Adulterers, and Adulteresses; know ye not that the friendship of the World is enmity with God; so that whosoever will be a Friend of the World, becometh the enemy of God?*

Jam. 4. 3. 1 John 2. 15.
Καὶ καταλαί.
(John 15. 19. 17. 14.)

We may shift as well as we can in the World, provided that we hold Innocence, and do not conspire with it against God, by Violation of our Duty to him. *Be wise as Serpents, innocent as Doves*, Matt. 10. 16. (*As Lambs*, Luke 10. 3.)

Psal. 37. 38. (Old Tr.)
Phil. 2. 5.

They reproach good Men as superstitious; who are afraid of invisible Powers; who let go Things in hand (present Interests and Pleasures) for a Reversion and Hope.

Rom. 16. 19. *Σοφὸς εἰς τὸ ἀγαθόν, ἀνεργὴς δὲ εἰς τὸ κακόν.*

As if God's Word were not sufficient Security: As if we may not as well rely upon Things conspicuous to Reason, as those which are obvious to Sense.

If Christianity be plainly false, they say well; but if it be true, very absurdly; yea, if probable, very imprudently; yea, if possible, not wisely.

Ἄτοποι.
2 Theff. 3. 22

They charge conscientious Men with timorousness, faint-heartedness.

It is timorousness or blameable Fear to dread Things without Reason, Things no wise formidable, which cannot hurt us; such a timorous Man is he, that out of Fear of Men (of displeasing them, of suffering by them, of their Reproach, &c.) transgresseth his Duty.

But to fear God is Wisdom, Soberness, Duty, Vertue; 'tis handsome and honourable, becoming our Nature, our Condition; the Passion of Fear was chiefly put in us for this Purpose, as its best Use.

Is it Courage, and not rather Madness to provoke, to resist, to challenge, to cope with the Almighty? Is it Courage to throw ones self down a Precipice, to leap into the infernal Lake? Is it Gallantry to dare transgress all Reason and Sobriety? Is it brave to be wild and senseless, &c.?

It is true Courage to resist and repel Sin, assailing a Man with whatever Advantages; to dare to do well, although vain Men deride, and spiteful Men hate us for it.

It is a kind of Martyrdom to be ill used by the World for adhering to his Duty, and he hath a share in that, *Blessed are they who suffer for righteousness.*

Matt. 10. 39.
Ο υψος τῆς
ψυχῆς αὐτῶν,
ἀπολείπει αὐ-
τὴν.

In fine, it is a vain Prudence, to be thus politick with God ; whereby we shall lose the whole, or that Part which is invaluable, out of Presumption to save a small inconsiderable Part.

Gal. 5. 11.
Matt. 10. 38.

If this be Prudence, *then* (as St. Paul saith) *is the offence of the cross ceased.*

Then our Lord prescribed a foolish Condition.

Phil. 3. 8.

Then were the Apostles very imprudent, who deserted all, and suffered so much for their Conscience ; being content to secure their Spiritual Interest, and to

Luke 10. 42.

obtain the eternal Rewards of Piety ; *choosing the better part, which could not be taken from them.*

Jam. 3. 13.

What the true Wisdom is in such Cases St. James hath told us, *Who is a wise Man, and endowed with knowledge among you ? let him shew out of a good conversation his Works, with meekness of Wisdom.*

SERMON XXXVI.

Of the Goodness of GOD.

PSALM CXLV. 9.

The Lord is good to All, and his tender Mercies are over all his Works.

THE Goodness of God is a frequented Theme ; to many perhaps it may seem vulgar and trite ; so that Discourse thereon, like a Story often told, may be nauseous to their Ears : but in truth neither can we speak too much upon this most excellent Subject, nor ought we ever to be weary in hearing about it ; for 'tis a Sign that the Palate of our Mind is distempered, if we do not with Delight and Affection relish any mention of Divine Goodness. Yea, the Observation of Mens common Practice would induce us to think, that either this Point is not so well known, or but little believed, or at least not well considered and applied. For how could we be so void of Love to God, of Gratitude toward Him, of Faith and Hope in Him, were we thoroughly persuaded, did we seriously consider, that He is so exceedingly Good toward us ? How can we be so insensible of the Benefits we enjoy, so distrustful of finding Succours and Supplies in our Need, so dissatisfied and discontented with what befalls us, if we conceive and weigh, that all things do proceed from, are guided and governed by immense Goodness ? How also, if Men have such an Opinion of God impressed on their Minds, comes it to pass that they are so little Careful to resemble and imitate him in Kindness, Bounty, and Mercy to one another ? How is it in fine, that the most powerful Argument to all manner of good Practice, and the mightiest Aggravation of Sin, if well known and pondered, hath so little Force and Efficacy upon us ? From Experience therefore this Argument may seem scarce sufficiently inculcated. We may add, that Discourse upon this Attribute (which above all other Attributes doth render God peculiarly admirable, and amiable) hath this special Advantage beyond

— Θεός, ὁ ποιῶν ὅλην, ἐφ' οἷς δια-
μαρτυρεῖται, ὅτι ὅς ὡς τὸ πᾶν ὡς
τίθεν ἰδιωτάριον. Naz. Orat. 26.

other Discourses, that it doth, if our Hearts conspire therewith, approach most nearly to the formal Exercise of the most high and heavenly Parts of Devotion, Praise and Thanksgiving ; that it more immediately conduces to the breeding, the nourishing, the augmenting in us the best and noblest of pious Affections, Love and Reverence to God ; Trust and Hope in him ; willing Resolutions to please and serve him ; whence it is consequent, that we cannot too much employ our Thoughts, our Words, or our Attention upon this Point. Besides so much Reason, we have also

also good Example to countenance us in so doing: We have the Precedent of the holy *Psalmist* resolving to make it his constant and continual Employment: *I will sing* (saith he) *of the Mercies of the Lord; with my mouth will I make known thy Faithfulness to all Generations.* And, *Every day will I bless thee, and I will praise thy Name for ever;* (that blessing and praising God, the Context shews to have consisted especially in the Declaration of God's great Goodness) and, *It is a good thing* (saith he again) *to give thanks unto the Lord, and to sing praises unto thy Name, O thou most High; to shew forth thy loving kindness in the morning, and thy faithfulness every night.* Such were his Intentions, and such his Judgment about this Practice; and we find him in effect true and answerable to them; Every Song of his, every Meditation, every exercise of Devotion chiefly harping upon this String; and he earnestly wishes that others would consent and consort with him therein; he earnestly exhorts and excites them thereto: *O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men. Praise the Lord, O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good, for his mercy endureth for ever.* That one Example might sufficiently Authorize this Practice; but we have innumerable others, and those the highest that can be, to encourage and engage us thereto; even the whole Choir of Heaven, whose perpetual Business and happy Entertainment it is to contemplate with their Minds, to celebrate with their Voices the immense Goodness of God; *They have* (as it is in the *Revelation*) *no rest day or night from performing this office.* Such is the Subject of our Discourse; the which our Text most plainly and fully expresses; asserting not only the Goodness of God; but the universal and boundless Extent thereof: *The Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies* (or *his bowels of affection and pity*) *are over all his works.* And that God indeed is such, we shall first endeavour to declare, then shall briefly apply the Consideration thereof to Practice.

That God the Lord, and Maker of all things is of himself, in regard to all his Creatures, especially to us Men, superlatively good, that is, disposed never without just or necessary Cause to harm us, and inclinable to do us all possible and befitting good, the universal Frame of Nature, and the constant Course of Providence do afford us sufficient reason to conceive, and most frequent, most express Testimonies of holy Scripture do more fully demonstrate. There is no Argument from natural Effects discernible by us, which proveth God's Existence, (and innumerable such there are, every sort of things well studied may afford some) the which doth not together persuade God to be very kind and benign; careful to impart to us all befitting Good, suitable to our natural Capacity and Condition; and unwilling that any considerable Harm, any extreme Want or Pain should befall us. (I interpose such Limitations, for that an absolute, or universal and perpetual exemption from all kinds, or all degrees of Inconvenience, an Accumulation of all sorts of appearing good upon us, doth not become, or suit our natural State of Being, or our Rank in Perfection among Creatures; neither all things being duly stated, and computed, will it turn to best account for us.) The best (no less convincing than obvious) Arguments, asserting the Existence of a Deity, are deduced from the manifold and manifest Footsteps of admirable Wisdom, Skill and Design apparent in the general Order, and in the particular Frame of Creatures; the beautiful Harmony of the whole, and the artificial Contrivance of each Part of the World; the which 'tis hardly possible that any unprejudiced and undistempered Mind should conceive to proceed from blind Chance, or as blind Necessity. But with this Wisdom are always complicated no less evident Marks of Goodness. We cannot in all that vast Bulk of the Creation, and numberless Variety of things discover any Piece of meer Pomp, or dry Curiosity; every thing seems to have some beneficial Tendency; according to which it confers somewhat to the need, convenience, or comfort of those principal Creatures, which are endued with Sense and Capacity to enjoy them. Most of them have a palpable Relation to the Benefit (to the Subsistence or Delight) of living Creatures; and especially in an ultimate Relation to the Benefit of Man; and the rest, although their immediate Use be not to our dim sight so discernible, may therefore be reasonably presumed in their natural designation to regard the same End. Wherefore as upon Consideration of that ample Provision, which is made in Nature for the necessary Sustenance, Defence, and Relief, for the Convenience, Delight, and Satisfaction of every Creature, any Man, who is not careless or stupid, may be induced to

Psal. 104. 24. cry out with the Psalmist: O Lord, how manifold are thy Works, in wisdom hast thou
 33. 5. 119. 64. made them all? So may he with no less reason and ground after him pronounce and
 57. 10. 108. 4. acknowledge; The Earth is full of the goodness of the Lord: The Earth, O Lord, is
 Psal. 33. 5. full of thy Mercy. Thy Mercy is great unto the Heavens; thy Mercy is great above
 119. 64. the Heavens. 'Tis indeed because Divine Goodness is freely diffusive and commu-
 57. 10. 108. 4. nicative of it self; because essential Love is active, and fruitful in beneficence;
 Psal. 104. 10. because highest Excellency is void of all Envy, Selfishness, and Tenacity, that the
 65. 11. World was produced such as it was; those Perfections being intrinsical to God's
 103. 4. Nature, disposed him to bestow so much of Being, of Beauty, of Pleasure upon
 Psal. 104. 28. his Creatures. He openeth his hand, they are filled with good: 'Tis from God's open
 Hand, his unconfined Bounty and Liberality, that all Creatures do receive all that
 good which fills them, which satisfies their Needs, and satiates their Desires.
 Every pleasant Object we view, every sweet and savoury Morfel we taste, every
 Fragrancy we smell, every Harmony we hear; the wholesome, the chearing, the
 useful; yea, the innocent and inoffensive Qualities of every thing we do use and
 enjoy, are so many perspicuous Arguments of Divine Goodness; we may not only
 by our Reason collect it, but we even touch and feel it with all our Senses.

The like Conclusion may be infer'd from the Observation of Divine Provi-
 dence. Every Signification, or Experiment, whence we may reasonably infer
 that Divine Power and Wisdom do concur in upholding, managing, and directing
 the general State of Things, or the particular Affairs of Men, being well examined
 and weighed, would afford Reason apt to persuade, that the Governour of the
 World is graciously affected toward his Creatures and Subjects. The general
 Preservation of Things in their natural Constitution and Order; the dispensing
 constant Vicissitudes of Season, so as may serve for the Supply of our Needs; the
 maintaining such a Course of Things in the World, that notwithstanding the great
 irregularity of Will, and violence of Passion in so many Persons; yet Men do ordi-
 narily shift so as to live tolerably upon Earth in Peace and Safety, and enjoyment
 of competent Accommodations for Life; with the Aids and Consolations arising
 from mutual Society; the Supports, Encouragement, and Rewards of Vertue
 many times in a strange Manner administered; the Restraints, Disappointments,
 and seasonable Chastisements of Wickedness; especially when it grows exorbitant
 and outrageous, unexpectedly intervening, with the like Passages of Providence,

Psal. 28. 5.
 Isa. 5. 12.

will, to him that shall regard the works of the Lord, and the operation of his hands,
 sufficiently declare as the other glorious Attributes (Wisdom, Power, and Justice)
 so especially the Goodness of him, who presides over the World; assuring that he
 is a Friend to the Welfare; and dislikes the Misery of Mankind. He that shall
 well observe, and consider how among so many fierce and hard-hearted, so many
 crafty and spiteful, so many domineering and devouring Spirits, the poor and weak,
 the simple and harmless sort of People do however subsist, and enjoy somewhat,
 cannot but suspect that an undiscernible Hand, full of Pity and Bounty, doth often
 convey the necessary supports of Life to them, doth often divert imminent Mis-
 chiefs from them; cannot but acknowledge it credible, what the holy Scripture
 teacheth, that God is the Friend, and Patron, and Protector of those needy and
 helpless People, redeeming their Soul from deceit and violence, (as the Psalmist speaks)
 that he is (as the Prophet expresseth it) a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy
 in his distress, a refuge from the Storm, a shadow from the Heat, when the blast of the
 terrible ones is as a Storm against the Wall. He that shall remark, how frequently
 in an unaccountable way, succour and relief do spring up to just and innocent

Psal. 14. 6. tot.
 10. 14.
 72. 12.
 Isa. 25. 4.

Psal. 37. 25.

Persons; so that in a whole Age (as the Psalmist observed) such Persons do not
 appear destitute or forsaken; how also Iniquity is commonly stop'd in his full
 carrier, and then easily receives a check, when its violence seem'd uncontrollable;
 how likewise many times the World is rescued from Confusions and Distractions
 unextricable by any visible Wit or Force; with other like Occurrences in human
 Affairs, must admit it for a reasonable Hypothesis (fit to render a Cause of such
 Appearances) that a transcendent Goodness doth secretly interpose, furthering the
 Production of such Effects; he must upon such Observation be ready to verify that

Psal. 58. ult.
 Acts 14. 17.

of the Psalmist: Verily there is a reward for the righteous, verily there is a God that
 judgeth the Earth. St. Paul instructs us, that in past-times, (that is, in all Gene-
 rations from the Beginning of Things) God did attest himself to be the Governour
 of the World: How? *αγαθοποιων*, by his Beneficence; giving to Men showers from
 Heaven,

Heaven, and fruitful Seasons, filling their Hearts with food and gladness: Competent Evidences it seems these were of his Providence, and withall (supposing that) certain Demonstrations of his Goodness: Although some have abused this kind of Testimony, or Argumentation so valid in its self, unto a contrary Purpose alledging, that if God ruled the World, so much Wickedness and Impiety would not be tolerated therein, that ingrateful and evil Men could not so thrive and flourish; that more speedy and more severe Vengeance would be executed; that Benefits would not be scattered among the Crowd of Men, with so promiscuous and undistinguishing a Freeness: But such Discourses, upon a just and true Account, do only infer the great Patience and Clemency, the unconfined Mercy and Bounty of our Lord; that he is in Disposition very different from pettish and impatient Man, who, should he have the Reins put into his Hands, and in his Administration of Things should be so often neglected, crossed, abused, would soon over turn all Things; and being himself discomposed with Passion, would precipitate the World into Confusion and Ruin. Things would not have subsisted hitherto, and continued in their orderly Course, but by the Moderation of an immense Goodness; by that

—magni custos clementia mundi.

Claud.

'Tis by the Lord's Mercies that we (we the whole Body of sinful Men, so guilty of heinous Provocations, and Rebellions against our Maker) are not consumed. And what again God in the Prophet speaks concerning Israel, he might have applied to the whole Nation of Men: *How shall I give thee up, Ephraim; how shall I deliver thee, Israel? how shall I make thee as Admah? how shall I set thee as Zeboim? I will not execute the fierceness of my Anger, I will not return to destroy Ephraim; for I am God, and not Man:* The Reason (for I am God, and not Man) is observable; implying (upon parity of Reason in the Cases, concerning that one Nation, and concerning the Body of Men) that it is an Indulgence, and forbearance above, if not contrary to the Temper of Man, and even beyond human Conceit, whereby the State of Things here doth subsist, and is preserved from Ruin.

Thus Nature, and thus Providence do bear witness concerning the Disposition of God. As for Scripture, there is nothing either in way of positive Assertion more frequently inculcated, or by more illustrious Examples set forth and made palpable, than this Attribute of God. When God would impart a Portraiture, or Description of himself to his dearest Friend, and Favourite Moses; the first and chief Lineaments thereof are several Sorts, or several Instances of Goodness; he expresses himself *Merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness:* *Merciful:* אל רחום; *Elrachum;*) a God of pitying, or strong in Pity; that is, most apt to commiserate and to succour those who are in Need or Distress. *Gracious,* that is, ready both freely to forgive Wrongs, and to dispense Favours. *Long-suffering,* or *longus iracundiam,* that is, not soon moved, or apt easily to conceive Displeasure; not hasty in execution of Vengeance, or venting his Anger in hurtful Effects. *Abundant in goodness,* that is, not sparing as to Quantity or Quality, either in the Multitude or Magnitude of his Favours, but in all respects exceedingly liberal; conferring willingly both very many, and very great Benefits. Such did God represent himself to Moses, when he desired a fuller Knowledge, and nearer Acquaintance with him, than ordinary Means afford. The same Character in Substance we have often repeated; and sometimes with Advantage of emphatical Expression, well deserving our Observation and Regard; as when the Prophet Joel saith, that God is *penitent, or sorry for evil inflicted;* and Micah, that *he delighteth in Mercy;* and when Nehemiah calleth him a *God of Pardons;* and when Isaiah represents him as *waiting* (or seeking Occasions) *to be gracious:* And all this in the Old Testament, where God seems to look upon Man with a less serene, and debonaire Aspect: Indeed as that Dispensation (suitably to the Nature and Condition of Things under it) doth set out God's Mercy and Goodness with especial Relation to this present World, or temporal Estate; so the New one more abundantly displays his more excellent care and love of our Souls; his great tenderness of our spiritual and eternal Welfare. It is all of it in its Nature and Design but as it were one entire Declaration of the *το χρηστόν τῆ θεῶ* (the beneficial Disposition, the Benignity, or Bountifulness of God, as St. Paul telleth us) 'tis a rare Project of divine *Philanthropy;* an illustrious *Affidavit* of God's wonderful Propensity to bless and save Mankind; manifested

nifested by the highest Expressions and Instances of Love and Goodness that were possible. (For his not sparing his own Son, *the express Image of his Substance*, the dearest Object of his infinite Love, the Partaker of his eternal Nature and Glory, but delivering him up a Sacrifice for our Offences; his most earnest woining our Baseness and Unworthiness to Reconciliation with him, and Admission or Acceptance of his Favour; his tendering upon so fair and easy Terms an endless Life in perfect Joy and Bliss; his furnishing us with so plentiful Means and powerful Aids for attaining that happy State; how pregnant Demonstrations are these, of unspeakable Goodness toward us, whence, The ordinary Titles in this Dispensation attributed unto him, are, *the God of love and peace; of hope, of patience; of all grace of all Consolation; the Father of Pities, rich in Mercy, full of Bowels; Love and Goodness it self*. Thus doth the Scripture positively assert God's Goodness; thus it directly represents and describes his gracious Disposition toward us. And as for Examples (which must serve as to illustrate and explain, so also to verify, and assure Matters of this Nature) if we carefully attend to God's ordinary Proceedings with Men there recorded, we shall find this Disposition very conspicuous in them. Who can recount the Number, or set out the Value of those Instances wherein God's Goodness is expressed toward such as lov'd him? Of his admirable Condescension in drawing them to him; of the affectionate Tendernefs, with which he constantly embraced them; of his merciful Indulgence toward them, when provoked by their untowardly Behaviour; of his kind Acceptance, and munificent recompensing their Endeavours to please him; of his deep compassionating their Sufferings; of his vigilant Carefulness over them, and over all their Concernments? Methinks the highest Expressions that Language, assisted with all its Helps of Metaphor and Resemblance can afford, are very languid and faint in Comparison of what they strain to represent, when the Goodness of God toward them who love him, comes to be expressed: *As the Heaven is high above the Earth, so great is his Mercy toward them that fear him. Like as a Father pitieth his Children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him*; So David strives to utter it, but with Similitudes far short of the Truth. If any will come near to reach it, 'tis that in Moses and Zachary, when they are compared to *the Apple of God's Eye*, that is, to the most dear and tender Part, as it were, about him.

We find them often stiled, and ever treated as Friends, and as Children; and that in a Sense transcending the vulgar Signification of those Words; for, what Friendship could endure, could pass over, could forget, could admit an entire Reconciliation, and Re-establishment in Affection after such heinous Indignities, such Infidelities, such Undutifulness as were those of Adam, of Noah, of David, of Peter: Who would have received into Favour and Familiarity a Manasses, a Magdalen, a Paul? Who would so far extend his Regard upon the Posterity (upon such a Posterity, so untoward, so unworthy) of his Friend, as God did upon that of Abraham, in respect unto him? What great Prince would employ his principal Courtiers to guard and serve a poor Attendant, a mean Subject of his? Yet; *The Angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them*; And many Instances we have of those glorious Inhabitants of Heaven by God's Appointment stooping down to wait upon, and to perform Service to the Sons of Men. But upon Examples of this Nature, being numberless, and composing indeed the main Body of the Sacred History (it being chiefly designed to represent them) I shall not insist; I shall only observe for preventing or satisfying Objections (yea indeed for turning them to the Advantage and Confirmation of that which we assert) that even in those Cases, wherein God's highest Severity hath been exercised, when God hath purposed to exhibit most dreadful Instances of his Justice upon the most provocative Occasions; we may discern his Goodness eminently shewing it self: That even in the greatest Extremity of his Displeasure, in his Acts of highest Vengeance, Mercy doth *κατακαυχᾶται ὁ θεὸς* (as St. James speaketh) *boast it it self, and triumph over Justice*: That God, as the Sun (to use Tertullian's Similitude) when he seems most to infect and scorch us, doth even then dispense useful and healthful Influences upon us. Even I say in the most terrible and amazing

Exam-

Rom. 5. 33.

13. 5.

2Cor. 13. 11.

1. 3.

Eph. 2. 4.

Jam. 5. 11.

1 John 4. 8.

Luke 6. 35.

For he is kind

unto the un-

thankful, and

to the evil.

Psal. 36. 6.

Psal. 103. 11.

13.

Deut. 32. 10.

Zach. 2. 8.

John 15. 14.

2Chron. 20. 7.

Psal. 34. 7.

Γίνεῖς φιλανθρωπία ἢ τιμωρία ἢ ἔγωγε
ἢ ἐγὼ πείθομαι καὶ ἀκούω σου. Naz.
Orat. 38.

Ἐγὼ ποσούτῳ ἐρωσίου εἶναι φημι ὅ
τι σε κινδυνεύω, ὡς μὴ μόνον ἀφ' ὧν
ἐτίμωσεν, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἀφ' ὧν ἐκόλασεν ὁμοί-
ως ἡμᾶς δυνάσθῃ καὶ ἀγαθότητι αὐτῆς
δεικνύται, καὶ ὅτι φιλανθρωπία. Chryl.
ἀνδρ. 5.

Ὁ θεὸς ἀπαθὴς ἐν καὶ ἐν ἐνέργειᾳ, καὶ
κολάζῃ, ὁμοίως ὅτι ἀγαθός. Ibid.

Jam. 2. 13.

Tunc maxime est optimus, cum tibi
non bonus; sicut Sol tibi etiam quando
non putat, optimus et utilis, St. Ter-
tull. in Marc. II. 2.

Examples of Divine Justice (such as were the ejecting and excluding Mankind from Paradise; the general Destruction in the Deluge; the excinding and expir-
 ation of the *Amorites* together with other Inhabitants of *Canaan*; the deli-
 vering *Israel* and *Judah* into the *Assyrian* Thralldom, the final Destruction of Je-
rusalem, together with the Dispersion of the *Jewish* Nation over the World, and
 its sad Consequences) we may (not hardly) observe Particulars, more than favour-
 ing of great Mercy and Goodness. Vide Chryf.
Tom. 6. Or. 8.
p. 63. optimé.

1. That (in most of these Cases, in all according to some Account) God was not moved to the Displeasure productive of those Effects but upon very great Con- siderations. That he did not seek Advantages, nor embrace all Occasions; but was incensed by superlative Degrees of Iniquity and Impurity (such in their own Nature, and much aggravated by their Circumstances) such as rendred common Life inconvenient and insupportable to Men; made the Earth to stink with their Filth and Corruption; to groan under the Burthen and Weight of them; to pant and labour for a Riddance from them.

2. That God did not upon the first Glimpses of Provocation proceed to the Exe- cution and Discharge of his Wrath, but did with wonderful Patience expect a Change in the Offenders, *waiting to be gracious*, as the Prophet speaketh; affording Esa. 30. 18. more than competent Time, and Means more than sufficient of appeasing him by Repentance; vouchsafing frequent Admonitions, Solicitations, Threatnings, moderate Corrections, and other such proper Methods conducing to their Amend- ment, and to their Preservation.

3. That their Infiictions themselves, how grievous soever in appearance, were not really extreme in Measure; not accompanied with so acute Torments, nor with so lingring Pains, nor with so utter a Ruin as might have been inflicted; but that (as *Ezra*, in respect to one of those Cases, confesseth) *they were less than their* Ez. 9. 13. *Iniquities deserved*. That (as it is in the *Psalms*) *He did not stir up all his Wrath*; Psal. 73. 38. which would have immediately consumed them, or infinitely tormented them.

4. That (consequently upon some of those Premises) the Afflictions brought upon them were in a Sort rather necessary than voluntary in respect of him; ra- ther a natural Fruit of their Dispositions and Dealings, than a free Result of his Ezek. 18. 23, Will; however contrary to his primary Intentions and Desires. Whence he no 32. 33. 11. less truly, than earnestly disclaims having any Pleasure in their Death, that he Lam. 3. 33. *afflicted willingly, or grieved the Children of Men*; and charged their Disasters upon Hof. 13. 9. themselves, as the sole Causes of them.

5. That farther, the Chastisements inflicted were wholesome and profitable, both in their own Nature, and according to his Design; both in respect to the generality of Men (who by them were warned, and by such Examples deterred from incurring the like Mischiefs; were kept from the Inconveniences, secured from the Temptations, the Violences, the Allurements, the Contagions of the present evil State; according to that Reason alledged for Punishments of this kind: (*All the people shall hear, and fear, and do no more presumptuously*) and in regard to the Sufferers themselves, who thereby were prevented from proceeding farther in their wicked Courses; accumulating (or, *treasuring up*, as the *Apostle* speaketh) farther Degrees of *Wrath*, as obdurate Rom. 2. 5. and incorrigible People will surely do: (*Why, saith the Prophet, shou'd ye be stricken* Isa. 1. 5. 26. 10. *any more?* (to what Purpose is moderate Correction?) *Ye will revolt more and more*. That he did with a kind of Violence to his own Inclinations, and Reluctancy in- flict Punishments on them. *O Ephraim, how shall I give thee up, O Ephraim*. Yea Hof. 6. 4. farther.

6. That during their Sufferance, God did bear Compassion toward them who underwent it. *His Bowels*, as we are told, *sounded and were troubled*; his *Heart was* Isa. 63. 9. 15. *turned within him*; his *Repentings were kindled together*; in all their Afflictions him- Hof. 11. 8. *self was afflicted*; he remember'd and consider'd they were but *Dust*; that they were but Jer. 31. 20. *Flesh* (that they were but of a weak and frail Temper; that they were naturally Gen. 6. 3. 8. 21. prone to Corruption and Evil) and did therefore pity their Infirmity, and their Psal. 103. 14. 78. 39. Misery.

7. That God in his *Wrath* remembered *Mercy* (as the Prophet *Habakkuk* speaks) Hab. 3. 2. mixing gracious Intentions of future Refreshment and Reparation with the pre- sent

Chryf. 'Ανδρ. ζ'.
 'Ουκ ἔστι δικαιοσύνη καὶ ἰατρὸς καὶ διδασκαλὸς
 ὁ Θεός. Ibid.
 Deut. 17. 13.
 Ἐπιτίθεισι τιμωρίαν, ἐπὶ τῶν ἀπειθήσων
 ἀπαιτῶν δίκην, ἀλλὰ πρὸς μέτρον διὰ διόρθω-
 σιν. Chryf. Tom. 8. p. 99.

Gen. 6. 3. sent Executions of Justice. *I know* (saith he in the Prophet *Jeremy*) *the Thoughts*
 Jer. 29. 11. *that I think toward you ; Thoughts of Peace, and not of Evil, to give you an expected*
 Isa. 54. 7. *End. Behold, I will bring Health and Cure, I will cure them, and will reveal unto them*
 abundance of Peace and Truth. And, *For a small Moment* (saith he again in *Esay*)
 have I forsaken thee, but with great Mercies will I gather thee. And, *Ye shall be com-*
 Ezek. 14. 21. *forted concerning the Evil that I have brought upon Jerusalem—and ye shall know, that*
I have not done without cause all that I have done in it ; saith the Lord (he saith so
 in *Ezekiel*) *without cause, that is, without a beneficial Design toward them.*

8. Lastly, That he always signified a readiness to turn from his Anger, and to
 forgive them ; and upon very equal and easy Terms to be fully reconciled to them ;
 Psal. 103. 9. according to that in the *Psalmist*, *He doth not always chide, neither will he keep his*
Anger for ever ; but upon any reasonable Overtures of Humiliation, Confession
 and Conversion to him, was ready to abate, yea, to remove the Effects of his Dis-
 Psal. 99. 8. *pleasure ; Thou wast a God that forgavest them, though thou tookest Vengeance of their*
Inventions.

These Particulars, if we attentively survey those dreadful Examples of Divine
 Severity forementioned (the greatest which History acquaints us with, or which
 have been shewed on this Theatre of Human Affairs) we may observe most of
 them in all, all of them in some, either plainly expressed, or sufficiently infi-
 nuated by the Circumstances observable in the Historical Narrations concerning
 them ; so that even the harshest Instances of God's wrathful Dealing with some
 Men, may well serve to the Illustration of his Mercy and Goodness toward all
 Men ; may evince it true, what our Lord affirms, that God is, *χρηστός ἐνὶ ἀχα-*
 Luke 6. 35. *ρίτοις, καὶ πονηροῖς, kind and beneficent even to the most ingratel and unworthy Persons.*
 To make which Observation good, and consequently to assert the Verity of our
 Text (That *God is good unto all, and merciful over all his Works*) against the most
 plausible Exceptions ; I shall examine the Particulars in the following Discourse.

SERMON XXXVII.

Of the Goodness of GOD.

PSALM CXLV. 9.

The Lord is good to All, and his tender Mercies are over all his Works.

I Shall now more particularly consider the several Instances beforementioned.

I. The Punishment inflicted on Mankind for the first Transgression containeth in it much of Depth and Mystery, surpassing perhaps all Capacity of Man to reach ; its full Comprehension being by Divine Wisdom (I conceive) purposely concealed from us ; so that I cannot pretend thoroughly to explain it ; and shall not therefore speak much about it.

This indeed is clear, that God did in his Proceedings occasion'd thereby, intend remarkably to evidence his grievous Resentment and Indignation against wilful Disobedience ; yet in the Management thereof we may observe ; that,

*Vid. Chryl. "Ανθ. ζ'.
 Οὐ δὲ ἔπε, καὶ ὁ ἀπὸ τοῦ εἰκὸς τῶν ὑπερσμένων
 ἐπείν, ὡς μαρτὶς ἡ παρμιαρε, &c. Ibid.*

1. After that Provocation (in it self so high, and liable to
 so great Aggravations) God did express his Resentment in so
 calm and gentle a Manner, that *Adam*, though abashed upon
 the Conscience of his Fault, was not yet by the Vehemency
 of the Reproof utterly dismayed or dejected.

2. God

2. God used great Moderation in the Infliction of this Punishment ; mitigating the Extremity of the Sentence justly decreed and plainly declared to *Adam*. (that Gen. 2. 17. in case of his offending against the Law prescribed him, he should immediately die) for notwithstanding his Forfeiture that very Day of Life, God reprieved him, and allowed him a long Life, almost of a Thousand Years after.

3. God did not quite reject Man thereupon, nor did withdraw his Fatherly Care and Providence from him, but openly continued them ; inasmuch that immediately after the Curse pronounced upon our first Parents, the next Passage we meet with is, that unto *Adam* and his *Wife* did the Lord God make Coats, and Gen. 3. 21. clothed them.

4. Although indeed Man was by his Fault a great Loser, and became deprived of high Advantages ; yet the Mercy of God did leave him in no very deplorable Estate, simply considered, as to his Life here ; the Relicks of his first Estate, and the Benefits continued to him being very considerable ; so that we the Inheritors of that great Disaster do commonly find the Enjoyment of Life, with the Conveniences attending it, to be sweet and desirable.

5. The Event manifests, that while God in appearance so severely punished Mankind, he did in his Mind reserve Thoughts of highest Kindness toward us ; even then designing not only to restore us to our former Degree, but to raise us to a Capacity of obtaining a far more high Pitch of Happiness. While he excluded us from a Terrestrial Paradise here, he provided a far better Celestial one, into which, if we please, by Obedience to his Holy Laws we may certainly enter. So that in this of all most heavy Instance of Vengeance, God's exceeding Goodness and Clemency do upon several Considerations most clearly shine.

II. The Calamity, which by the general Deluge did overflow the World, was not (we may consider) brought upon Men but in regard to the most enormous Offences long continued in, and after Amendment was become desperate. Not till after much forbearance, and till Men were grown to a superlative Pitch of Wickedness by no fit means (by no friendly Warning, no sharp Reprehension, no moderate Chastisement) corrigible. Not until the Earth was become (especially for Persons of any Innocence or Integrity) no tolerable Habitation, but a Theatre of lamentable Tragedies, a Seat of horrid Iniquity, a Sink of loathsome Impurity. So that in Reason it was to be esteemed rather a Favour to Mankind to rescue it from so unhappy a State, than to suffer it to persist therein. To snatch Men away out of so uncomfortable a Place, from so wretched a Condition, was a Mercy ; it had been a Judgment to have left them annoying, rifling and harassing ; biting, tearing and devouring ; yea defiling and debauching each other ; and so heaping upon themselves Loads of Guilt, and deeper Obligations to Vengeance. *The Earth* (saith the Text) *was corrupt before God ; and the Earth was* Gen. 6. 11. *filled with Violence. God looked upon the Earth, and behold it was corrupt ; for all Flesh had corrupted its way upon the Earth ;* which universal and extreme Corruption had not in probability sprung up in a small time (for,

Nemo repente fait turpissimus, ———

is true not only of single Men, but of Communities ; no People, no Age, doth suddenly degenerate into extreme Degrees of Wickedness) so that the Divine Patience had long endured and attended upon Men, before the Resolution of thus punishing them was taken up ; the which also was not at first peremptory and irreversible, but in God's Design and Desire it was revocable ; for the World had a long Reprieve after the Sentence pass'd ; Execution was deferr'd till *Noah's* long preaching of Righteousness, and denouncing of Judgment in a manner so notorious and signal (not by verbal Declarations only, but by the visible Structure of the Ark) could prevail nothing toward their Amendment, but was either distrusted or disregarded, and perhaps derided by them. For, as *St. Peter* tells us, *They were disobedient, when once the Long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the* 1 Pet. 3. 20. *Ark was preparing ;* that is (as is collected by several Interpreters from the * Text * 2 Pet. 2. 5. *Gen. 6. 3.* of the Story) during no less than 120 Years ; a competent time for their recollecting themselves, and endeavouring by amendment of Life to prevent the Ruin threatened to come upon them. Yet notwithstanding that, this obstinate and incorrigible

Gen. 6. 8.

corrigible Disobedience did so much displease God, as that in Consideration thereof God is said to have *repented that he made Man on the Earth*, and to have been thereby grieved at the Heart : Yet did he so temper his Anger as not utterly to destroy Mankind, but provided against its total ruin, by preserving one Family as a Seminary thereof ; preserving the Father thereof (questionless by a special Grace) from the spreading Contagion, inspiring him with Faith, and qualifying him for the Favour, which by him he designed to communicate unto the World ; the reparation thereof, and restoring the Generations of Men. So that also through this Passage of Providence, how dismal and dreadful soever at first sight, much Goodness will be transparent to him that looks upon it attentively.

Levit. 18.

III. In the next Place, as to that Extermination and Excision of the *Canaanites*, which carries so horrible an appearance of Severity, we may find it qualifiable, if we consider, that for the nature of the Trespasses, which procured it, they were insufferably heinous and abominable : Most sottish, barbarous, and base Superstitions (Cruelty and Impurity being essential Ingredients into their Performances of Religion, and it being Piety with them to be exceedingly wicked) and in their other Practice most beastly Lasciviousnesses, most bloody Violences, Oppressions and Rapines generally abounding. So that for those Men themselves, who were by turns, as it happened, the Authors and the Objects of these Dealings, it could not be desirable to continue in a State of living so wretched and uncomfortable. Impunity had been no Mercy to such People, but rather a Cruelty ; cutting them off must needs be the greatest Favour they were capable of ; it being only removing them from a Hell here, and preventing their deserving many worse Hells hereafter. Even to themselves it was a Favour and a greater one to their Posterity, whom they might have brought forth to succeed in their Courses, and to the Consequences of them ; whom they would have engaged into their wicked Customs, and their woful Mischiefs. They were not so destroyed from the Land, until it grew uninhabitable in any tolerable manner, and it self could not, as it were, endure them any longer, but (as the Text doth most significantly express

Levit. 18. 28.

it) *did spue them out* ; being like a Stomach surcharg'd with foul, or poisonous Matter, which it loaths, and is pained with, and therefore naturally labours to expel. Neither was this sad Doom executed upon them till after 400 Years of Forbearance : For even in *Abraham's* Time God took notice of their Iniquity, then born and growing ; and gave Account of his suspending their Punishment ; *because* (said he) *the iniquity of the Amorites* was not yet full (that is, was not yet arrived to a pitch of desperate Obstinacy and Incurability :) While there was the least glimpse of Hope, the least Relicks of any Reason, any Regret, any Shame in them, the least possibility of Recovery, God stopped his avenging Hand ; but when all ground of hope was removed ; the whole Stock of natural Light and Strength was imbezzled ; all Fear, all Remorse, all Modesty were quite banished away ; all Means of Cure had proved ineffectual ; the Gangrene of Vice had seized on every Part, Iniquity was grown mature and mellow ; then was the Stroke of Justice indeed not more seasonable than necessary ; then was the fatal Sword the only proper Remedy ; then so with one Stroke to cut off them, and their Sins and their Mischiefs, and their Miseries together, was an Argument no less strong and clear of God's merciful Goodness, than of his just Anger toward them.

Gen. 15. 16.

IV. The like Account we may render of God's Judgments upon the People of *Israel*. If we consult the *Prophets*, who declare the State of Things, the Facts, the Dispositions, the Guilts, that brought them down from Heaven, we shall see, that they came upon Account of an universal Apostasy from both the Faith and Practice of true Religion ; *a deep corruption (like that in the days of Gibeah, as the Prophet Hosea speaketh)* in Mind and Manners ; an utter perverting of all Truth and Right ; an obstinate Compliance with, or Emulation of the most abominable Practices of the Heathen Nations about them ; an Universal Apostasy, I say, from God and all Goodness ; a thorough Prevalence of all Iniquity. Hear the *Prophets* expressing it, and describing them. *Jeremy ; Run ye to and fro through the Streets of Hierusalem ; see now, and know, and seek in the broad places thereof ; if ye can find a Man ; if there be any that executeth Judgment, that seeketh the Truth, and I will pardon*

Hos. 9. 9.

Jer. 5. 1.

pardon it. *Esay*; *The Earth is defiled under the Inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the Laws, changed the Ordinances, broken the everlasting Covenant: Ah sinful Nation! a People laden with Iniquities, a Seed of evil Doers; Children that are Corrupters; they have forsaken the Lord, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto Anger; they are gone away backward, &c.* Thus do these and other Prophets in a like Strain describe in the Gross the State of Things preceding those Judgments. And in *Ezekiel* (in divers Places, particularly in the 8th, but especially in the 22d, *Ezek. 22*: Chapter.) we have their Offences in Retail, and by Parts (their gross Impieties, their grievous Cruelties, Extortions and Oppressions) set out copiously, and in most lively Colours. And as the Quality of their Provocations was so bad, and the Extension of them so large, so was their Condition desperate; there were no means of Remedy left, no hopes of Amendment; so was their Forehead covered with Impudence, their Heart hardened with Obstinacy, their Minds deeply tinctured with habitual Pravity and Perverseness: *Can the Ethiopian change his Skin, or the Leopard his Spots, then may ye also do good that are accustomed to do evil*, saith *Jer. 13. 23.* *Jeremy* concerning them. All Methods of reclaiming them had proved fruitless; no favourable Dealings, no gentle Admonition, or kind Instruction would avail any thing; for 'tis of them the Prophet *Esay* saith; *Let Favour be shewed to the Wicked, yet will he not learn Righteousness.* No Advices, no Reproofs (how frequent, how vehement, how urgent soever) had any Effect upon them. Almighty God declares often that he had spoken unto them rising up early, but they would not hear nor regard his Speech; did not only neglect, and refuse, but despise, loath, mock, and reproach it (*turning their Back upon him; pulling away their Shoulder, stiffning their Neck, and stopping their Ears, that they should not hear*) that he had spread out his Hands all the day long to a rebellious and gainsaying People; to a People that (with extreme Insolence and Immodesty) provoked him to Anger continually to his Face. Nor could any Tenders of Mercy allure or move them: *I said* (God said it in *Jeremy*) *after all these things, turn unto me, but she returned not. Amend your Ways and your Doings, and obey the Voice of the Lord your God, and the Lord will repent him of the Evil that he hath pronounced against you. Repent, and turn yourselves from all your Transgressions, so Iniquity shall not be your Ruin;* and innumerable the like Overtures we have of Grace and Mercy to them; all which they proudly and perversely rejected, persisting in their wicked Courses: They even repelled and silenced, they rudely treated and persecuted the Prophets sent unto them with Messages of kind Warning, and Overtures of Grace; so obstructing all access of Mercy to themselves: *They say to the Seers, see not; and to the Prophets prophesy not unto us right things:* So *Esay* reports their Proceeding; *Which of the Prophets did not your Fathers persecute:* So *St. Stephen* expostulates with them. Neither were gentler Chastisements designed for their Correction and Cure any-wise available; they made no Impression on them, they produced no Change in them: *In vain* (saith God) *I have smitten your Children, they have received no Correction.* And, *Thou hast smitten them, but they have not grieved; thou hast consumed them, but they have refused to receive Correction; they have made their Faces harder than a Rock, they have refused to return; and, The People turneth not to him that smiteth them, neither do they seek the Lord of Hosts.* Unto this *καταβλισμὸς εἰς ἀπώλειαν*, this perfect Figness (as *St. Paul* speaketh) this maturity of desperate and irrecoverable Impiety, had that People grown, not at once, and on a sudden, but by continual steps of Provocation, through a long course of Time, during that divine Patience sparing them, and by various Expedients striving to recover them. This Consideration is frequently insisted upon, especially in the Prophet *Jeremy*, *The Children of Israel, and the Children of Judah have only done evil before me from their youth; since the day that your Fathers came forth out of the Land of Egypt unto this day, I have even sent unto you all my Servants the Prophets, daily rising up early, and sending them; Yet they hearkned not unto me, &c.* Well then, after so many hundred Years of abused Patience, and unsuccessful Labour to reclaim them, it was needful that Justice should have her Course upon them: Yet how then did God inflict it, with what Mildness and Moderation, with what Pity and Relenting? *Nevertheless* (say they in *Nehemiah*) *for thy great Mercies sake thou didst not utterly consume them, nor forsake them, for thou art a gracious and merciful God.* And, *Thou hast punished us less than our Iniquities deserve, doth Ezra confess.* *I will not execute the fierceness of my Anger;* doth God himself resolve and declare in *Hosea*. So

Jer. 31. 20. mild he was as to the measure of his punishing ; and what Compassion accompanied it, those pathological Expressions declare : *My Heart is turned within me, my Repentings are kindled together. Is Ephraim my dear Son, is he a pleasant Child ? For since I spake against him, I do earnestly remember him still, therefore my Bowels are troubled for him. In all their Afflictions he was afflicted, &c.* We may add ; that notwithstanding all these Provocations of his Wrath, and Abusings of his Patience, which thus necessitated God to execute his Vengeance ; yet even during the Execution thereof, and while his Hand was so stretched forth against them, he did retain Thoughts of Favour and Intentions of doing good, even toward this so ingrateful, so insensible, so incorrigible a People : *For a small time (saith God) have I forsaken thee, but with great Mercies will I gather thee : I know the Thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, Thoughts of Peace, and not of Evil, to give you an expected End.* Now these Things being seriously laid together, have we not occasion and ground sufficient even in this Instance, no less to admire and adore the wonderful Benignity, Mercy, and Patience of God, than to dread and tremble at his Justice ?

V. As for the last so calamitous and piteous Destruction of *Hierusalem*, with the grievous Consequences thereof, as we might apply thereto the former Considerations, so we shall only observe what was peculiar in that Case ; that God dispensed such Means to prevent it ; (to remove the meritorious Causes thereof, obstinate Impenitency and Incredulity ; resisting the Truth by him sent from Heaven with so clear a Revelation and powerful Confirmation ; despising the Spirit of God, and the Dictates of their own Conscience ; basely misusing divers ways, and at last cruelly murdering the Son of God) such Means, I say, God did employ for the removing those Provocatives of Vengeance, which (as our Lord himself saith)

Matt. 11. 21. were sufficient to have converted *Tyre and Sidon* ; yea, to have preserved *Sodom* itself ; so that our Saviour could with a compassionate Grief deplore the Unsuccessfulness of his tender Affection, and solicitous Care for their Welfare, in these

23. 37. passionate Terms ; *How often would I have gathered thy children as a hen gathers her chickens under her wing, but ye would not ?* That St. John the Baptist his sharp Reproofs, his powerful Exhortations, his downright and clear forewarnings of what would

3. 10. follow (*Even now, said he, the axe is laid to the root of the tree*) attended with so remarkable Circumstances of his Person, and his Carriage (which induced all the World about him to regard him as no ordinary Man, but a special Instrument of

Luke 7. 30. God, and Messenger from Heaven) did yet find no effect considerable ; the *Pharisees* and *Lawyers*, those corrupt Guides, whose Authority managed the blind

Matt. 11. 18. Multitude, *defeating the counsel of God toward themselves*, as St. Luke speaketh ; (that is, defeating his gracious Purpose of reclaiming them from Disobedience, and consequently of withholding the Judgments imminent) they reviled the Person of that venerable Prophet, *He hath a devil*, said they ; they slighted his Premonitions, and rejected his Advices, by observing which, those dreadful Mischiefs, which fell upon their rebellious Heads, might have been averted. We may add, that even those fearful Judgments were tempered with Mixtures of favourable Design, not only to the Community of Mankind (which by so remarkable a Vengeance upon the Persecutors of our Lord and the Scorners of his Doctrine was converted unto, or confirmed in the Christian Faith) but even toward that People whom it served to convince of their Errors and Crimes ; to induce them to Repentance, to provoke them unto the Acknowledgment and Embracing of God's Truth, so palpably vindicated by him. So that I might here apply that Passage of St. Paul (if not directly and adequately according to his Sense, yet with no incongruous Allusion at least) *Have they stumbled, that they should fall* (or, was there no other Design of God's Judgments upon them, but their utter Ruin ?) *μη ὥστε • No such matter ; but through their fall salvation came to the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy* (or emulation.) And, in effect, as our Lord in the midst of his Sufferings did affectionately pray for God's Mercy upon them, as the Apostles did offer Reconciliation unto them all indifferently, who would repent, and were willing to embrace it ; so were such of them as were disposed to comply with those Invitations, received to grace, how deeply soever involved in the continued Guilt of

1 Tim. i. 16. those enormous Persecutions, Injuries and Blasphemies ; as particularly Saint Paul, that illustrious Example of God's Patience and Mercy in this Case. So that neither by this instance is any Attribute of God more signalized, than his transcendent

Goodness,

Goodness, in like manner as by the former instances, and in analogy to them by all others, that may be assigned. By all of them it will appear that God is primarily and of himself disposed to do all fitting and possible Good to Men, not to inflict Evil more than is fit and necessary; that God is indeed *Optimus ex natura proprietate* De resurr. Carnis, c. 14. (most good according to property of nature) although *justus ex causa necessitate* (severe from the necessity of the Case) as Tertullian speaketh. To afflict Men (either some

Men singly, or whole Societies of Men) may be sometimes expedient upon several Accompts; for vindicating the Esteem, and supporting the Interest of Goodness, which may by impunity be disgraced, endamaged, endangered; for the discrimination of good and evil Men, in an observable manner; for the Encouragement and Comfort of the Good; the Reduction and Amendment of the Bad; for preventing the Contagion, and stopping the Progress of Iniquity, whereupon greater Guilts and worse Mischiefs would ensue; it may be as necessary as sharp Physick Basil. Orat. Quod Deus non est causa mali, elegantè & pulchrè de hac to cure publick or private Distempers; as an Instrument of rousing us out of our sinful Lethargies; as that which may cause us better to understand our selves, and more to remember God; as a ground of fearing God, and an inducement to believe his Providence. For those and many such Purposes to bring upon Men things

disastful to Sense, may be very requisite; nor doth the doing it any wise prejudice the Truth of divine Goodness, but rather confirms it, commends it, and advances its just Esteem. It would be a fond Indulgence, not a wise Kindness; a cruel, rather than a loving Pity to deal otherwise. In fine, we are to consider, that all the Mischiefs we undergo, God doth not so much bring them on us, as we do pull them on our selves. They are *αὐθαίρετα πύματα*, *affected*, or *self-chosen Mischiefs*; Wisd. 1. 12. Carm. Pythag. Cyril. Hier. Damasc. they are *καὶ βλαστύματα περαιρέσεως*, *bad sprouts of our free choice* (as a Father calls them) they are (as another Father faith) *ἐκείων καὶ ὧν ἀκέραια ἐκγονα* (*the unwilling off-springs of wilful evils*) they are the certain results of our own Will,

or the natural Fruits of our Actions; Actions, which (however God desire, advise, command, persuade, entreat, excite) we do will, we are resolved to perform. *We in a manner* (as Salvian faith) *do force God to do whatever he doeth in this kind; violently plucking down vengeance on our own heads; compelling the kind and merciful Lord, against his nature and will, to afflict us; not so much as giving him leave to spare us.* God vehemently disclaims himself to be the original Cause; to design (according to absolute or primary Intention) to desire to delight in our Grief, or our Ruin. *As I live, faith the Lord, (and surely when God swears, we may believe that he is very serious) I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live. I call heaven to record this day against you, that I have set life and death before you, therefore chuse life. He doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men. He would have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth. He would not have any perish, but that all should come to Repentance. He made not death, nor hath he pleasure in the destruction of the living.* God then, if we may believe him, is not the first Author of our Calamities: Who then? He tells us himself: *O Israel, thou hast destroyed thy self: thou hast fallen by thy own iniquity. Your sins have with-holden good things from you. Our iniquities like the wind have taken us away. How often would I have gathered you, but ye would not?* The Designs, and the Endeavours of God do tend to our Welfare and

Salvation; 'tis our Will and our Actions which only procure our Ruin: *Tis we, that (as the Wise-man faith) seek death in the error of our life; and pull upon our own selves destruction.* So that, to conclude this Part of our Discourse, even those Passages of Providence, which at first glimpse appear most opposite, or disadvantageous to the Goodness of God (or to our Opinion and Belief concerning it) do, being well sifted, no wise prejudice it, but rather serve to corroborate and magnify it.

I shall only farther briefly touch (or rather but mention) the Uses and Effects, to the Producing which, the Consideration of God's Goodness, in so manifold Ways declared, should be applied.

1. It should beget in us hearty Love and Reverence toward God, in regard to this Attribute so excellent and amiable in it self, so beneficial and advantageous to us. What can we esteem, what can we love, if so admirable Goodness doth not

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affect us? How prodigiously cold and hard is that Heart, which cannot be warm'd and softned into Affection by so melting a Consideration?

2. It should produce, as grateful Sense in our Hearts, so real Endeavours of thankful Obedience in our Lives. It should make us *walk worthy of God, to all well-pleasing, bringing forth fruit in every good work*; taking heed of doing as did *2Chro. 32. 35. Hezekiah*, of whom it is said; that he *rendred not according to the benefit done unto him, for his heart was lifted up; therefore was wrath upon him*; that we may not have that Expostulation justly applied unto us: *Do ye thus requite the Lord; O foolish people and unwise?*

3. It should engage us the more to fear God; complying with the Prophet's Admonition; *Fear the Lord and his goodness*. Considering that intimation of the Psalmist; *There is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayst be feared*; observing that Advice of Samuel, *Only fear the Lord, and serve him, for consider what great things he hath done for you*. For that indeed nothing is more terrible, than Goodness slighted, and Patience abused.

4. It should humble, ashame and grieve us, for having crossed and offended such exceeding Goodness and Mercy. It should cause us greatly to detest our Sins, which lie under so heinous an Aggravation, to be deeply displeased with our selves, who have so unworthily committed them.

5. It should therefore render us wary and vigilant against the Commission of any Sin; that is, of incurring the Guilt of so enormous Ingratitude and Baseness; making us cautious of doing like those, of whom 'tis confessed in *Nehemiah*; *They did eat, and were filled and delighted themselves in thy great goodness; nevertheless they were disobedient, and rebelled against thee, and cast thy laws behind their back*.

6. It should also breed and nourish in us Faith and Hope in God. For what Reason can we have to distrust of so great Goodness; that he will refuse to help us in our need; that he will fail in Accomplishment of his Promise; that he will withhold what is convenient for us? It should preserve us from Despair. What Temptation can we have to despair of Mercy, if we heartily repent of our Misdoings, and sincerely endeavour to please him?

7. It should upon the same Account excite us to a free and constant exercise of all Devotions. For why should we be shy or fearful of entring into so friendly and favourable a Presence; why should we be backward from having (upon any occasion or need) a recourse to him, who is so willing, so desirous, so ready to do us good? What should hinder us from delighting in Oblations of Blessing and Praise unto him?

8. It ought to render us submissive, patient and contented under God's Hand, of Correction, or Trial, as knowing that it cannot be without very just Cause, that such Goodness seemeth displeased with us; that we are the chief Causes of our Suffering, or our Want; so that we can have no good Cause to repine, or complain: For, *Wherefore doth the living man complain? since a man (suffers) for the punishment of his sins*; since it is *our sins that withhold good things from us*. Since also we considering this Attribute may be assured, that all God's Dispensations do aim and tend to our Good.

9. It should also in gratitude toward God, and imitation of him, engage us to be good; kind and bountiful, peaceable, and apt to forgive; meek and gentle, pitiful and affectionate toward our Brethren. *To be good and merciful, as our heavenly Father is merciful and benign even toward the wicked and ungrateful*; to be *kind unto one another, full of bowels, forgiving one another, as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven us*.

10. Lastly, We ought to have an especial Care of perverting this excellent Truth by Mistakes and vain Presumptions; that we do not turn the grace of God into wantonness, or occasion of licentious Practice. Because God is very good and merciful, we must not conceive him to be fond, or slack, or careless; that he is apt to indulge us in Sin, or to connive at our presumptuous Transgression of his Laws. No; *ἐνσταυ τῷ ἀγαθῷ, ἢ ἀγαθῷ, ἡ μισοπονεία (the hatred of wickedness is consequent upon goodness even as such, as Clemens Alex. saith)* God even as he is good, cannot but detest that which is opposite and prejudicial to Goodness; he cannot but maintain the Honour and Interest thereof; he cannot, he will not endure us to dishonour him, to wrong our neighbour, to spoil our selves. As he is a sure Friend to us, as his Creatures, so he is an implacable Enemy to us as impeni-

impenitent Rebels and Apostates from our Duty. *The wicked, and him that loveth violence his soul hateth.* As he is infinitely benign, so he is also perfectly holy, and of purer eyes than to behold iniquity. *He is not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness, neither shall evil dwell with him. The foolish shall not stand in his sight, he hateth all workers of iniquity. His face is against them that do evil.* Finally, as God is gracious to all such as are capable of his Love, and qualified for his Mercy; so he is an impartial and upright Judge, who will deal with Men according to their Deserts, according to the Tenour of his Laws and Ordinances; according to his immutable Decree and Word: so that as we have great Reason to trust, and hope in him, so we have no true ground to presume upon him; vainly to trifle, or insolently to dally with him.

But I leave this Point to be farther improved by your Meditations.

Grant we beseech thee, Almighty God, that the words which we have heard this day with our outward ears, may through thy grace be so grafted inwardly in our hearts, that they may bring forth in us the fruit of good living, to the honour and praise of thy Name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

SERMON XXXVIII.

No Respect of PERSONS with GOD.

ROM. II. 11.

For, There is no Respect of Persons with God.

IT is an ordinary Conceit, grounded on a superficial View of Things, that Almighty God dispenseth his Gifts with great Inequality, and dealeth very partially with Men; being lavish in his Bounty to some, but sparing therein to others; slack and indulgent in calling some to Account, but rigorous and severe in Judgment toward others.

Which Imagination often hath Influence upon the Affections and the Actions of Men; so that hence some Men do highly presume, others are much discouraged; some are apt to boast themselves special Darlings and Favourites of Heaven; others are tempted to complain of their being quite deserted, or neglected thereby.

But whoever more carefully will observe Things, and weigh them with good Consideration, shall find this to be a great mistake; and that in truth God distributeth his Favours with very equal Measures, he poizeth the Scales of Justice with a most even hand; so that reasonably no Man should be exalted, no Man should be dejected in Mind, upon Account of any considerable Difference in God's regard towards him, and other Persons; the which is clearly discovered by God, or merely dependeth on his Will and Providence.

The Advantages, which one Man hath above another, being estimated morally, in reference to solid Felicity and Content, are indeed none; or are not absolutely made by God, but framed by Men unto themselves. For

God is indifferently affected toward Persons as such, nakedly and privately considered; or as divested of moral Conditions, Qualifications and Actions; He in his Dealing, whether as Benefactor or Judge, purely considereth the Reason and Exigency of Things, the intrinsic Worth of Persons, the real Merits of each Cause; He maketh no arbitrary or groundless Discriminations; he neither loveth and favoureth, nor loatheth and discountenanceth any Person unaccountably: He

He doth utterly disclaim Partiality, or Respect of Persons, as a calumnious Aspersion on him, and a Scandal to his Providence.

Such in holy Scriptures he representeth himself, upon various Occasions; declaring his perfect Impartiality, and that nothing beside the Right and Reason of Cases doth sway with him; all other Considerations being impertinent and insignificant to him. For Instance,

It is declared, That he hath no partial Respect to Nations; for the Piety of
(Rom. 10. 12. 3. 29.) *Job an Edomite, of Melchisedeck a Canaanite, of Jethro a Madianite were very*
pleasing to him; he favourably did hear the Prayers, and accept the Alms of *Cornelius a Roman Soldier*; whereupon St. Peter made this general Reflection, *Of a*
Acts 10. 31. *Truth I perceive, that God is no respecter of Persons; But in every Nation, he that*
feareth him, and worketh Righteousness, is accepted with him.

He is declared not to regard the external Profession of true Religion, but real
Practice according to it; *He rendereth (saith St. Paul) to every man according to*
(Gal. 5. 6. 6. 15. 3. 28.) *his deeds—tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of*
Col. 3. 11, *the Jew first, and also of the Gentile; but glory, honour, and peace to every man*
Rom. 2. 6, *that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile; for (addeth the Apo-*
9. 10. *stle, assigning the Reason of this proceeding) there is no respect of Persons with*
(10. 12. 3. 29.) *God.*

He is said not to respect Faces, or any exteriour Appearances, however specious in the Eye of the World; according to that saying of God to Samuel, at the
1 Sam. 16. 7. *choice of David before his Brethren; Look not on his countenance, or on the height*
of his stature, because I have refused him; for the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for
man looketh on the outward appearance; but the Lord looketh on the heart.

It is expressed, That he hath no respect to the outward Estate, or worldly
Rank and Dignity of Men; but that Princes and Peasants, Masters and Servants,
the honourable or wealthy, and the mean or poor are of equal Consideration with
Job 34. 19. *him; He (saith Job) accepteth not the persons of Princes, nor regardeth the rich*
Sap. 6. 7. *more than the poor; for they are all the work of his hands; and St. Paul biddeth*
Ephes. 6. 9. *Masters to deal fairly with their Servants, knowing (saith he) that your Master is*
Coloss. 3. 25, *also in heaven; neither is there respect of persons with him.*
4. 1.

We are taught, that He doth not regard even the most sacred Offices, or more
worthy Accomplishments of Men, in Prejudice to the verity of Things, or equity
Gal. 2. 6. *of the Case; for hence St. Paul maintaineth his resolute Behaviour toward those*
great Pillars of Religion, St. Peter and St. James; Of these who seemed to be some-
what, whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me, God accepteth no man's
person.

It is frequently inculcated, that he hath no Consideration of any Gifts, of Sa-
crifices, of Services presented to him with sinister intent, to compound for Sin,
or excuse from Duty, to pervert Justice, or palliate Wrong; according to that
Deut. 10. 17. *[Declaration of Moses, The Lord your God is God of Gods, and Lord of Lords; a*
great God, a mighty and a terrible, which regardeth not persons, nor taketh re-
2 Chron. 19. 7. *ward; and that] Charge of King Jehoshaphat to his Judges, Let the Fear of the*
Lord be upon you; take heed, and do it; for there is no iniquity with the Lord our
God, nor respect of persons, nor taking of gifts. And, Do not
Eccles. 35. 12. (Isa. 1. 3. 61. 8. 66. 3. *think (saith the Hebrew Wise-man) to corrupt (him) with gifts;*
Prov. 15. 8. 21. 27. Amos 5. 21. 22. *for such he will not receive; and trust not to unrighteous sacrifices;*
Jer. 6. 20. Mic. 6. 7. 8. Hos. 6. 6. *for the Lord is Judge, and with him is no respect of persons.*

In fine, it is often generally declared, that God impartially dispenseth Recom-
pences, in just Proportion, according to the Deeds of Men: *He (saith St. Paul)*
Rom. 2. 11. *that doeth wrong, shall receive for the wrong which he hath done, and there is no*
Col. 3. 25. *respect of persons; And if (saith St. Peter) ye call upon the Father, who without*
1 Pet. 1. 17. *respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your so-*
journing here in fear.

There is nothing more frequently asserted, or more seriously urged in holy
Scripture, than this Point, that God will judge, and deal with Men, not accor-
ding to his absolute, antecedent Affections, but according to their own works; or
the tenour of their Practice, duly scann'd and estimated by the Rules of Justice;
so that the really better Man will certainly prove the happier, and the worse
Matt. 16. 27. *Man shall be the more wretched: He will reward every Man (saith our Lord)*
Rom. 2. 6. *κατὰ τὴν πράξιν αὐτοῦ, according to his practice; Everyone (saith St. Paul) shall re-*
Apoc. 2. 23. *ceive*
20. 12.

ceive the things done in his body, *κατὰ τὸ ἔργον*, suitably (in just proportion) to his Works; and Each Man shall receive *ἰδίον μισθόν* his own wages according to his own labour; and then praise (or a due taxation) shall be to every man from God: *Behold* (saith He in the Revelation) *I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to recompense each man, ὡς τὸ αὐτοῦ ἔργον ἔσται, as his work shall be.*

2 Cor. 5. 10.
1 Cor. 3. 8.
(Jer. 17. 10.
32. 19.
Psal. 62. 13.)
1 Cor. 4. 5.
Apoc. 22. 12.
Ἀποδοῦναι
ἐκαστῷ.

Wherefore by sacred Testimonies it is abundantly manifest, that Impartiality is a divine Attribute, and Perfection of God; the which (for our greater Satisfaction, and farther Illustration of the Point) may be also evinced by divers Arguments, some proving that it must be so, others shewing that it is so, some inferring it *a priori*, from the prime most avowed Attributes of God's Nature; and from his Relations to Men; others arguing it *a posteriori*, from principal Instances of God's Proceedings and providential Dispensations toward Men.

Of the first Sort are these.

1. God is impartial, because he is perfectly wise, and thence doth truly estimate Persons and Things.

Wisdom doth look evenly, with a free and pure (an indifferent and uncorrupt) Eye upon all Things; apprehending and esteeming each as it is in it self; making no Distinction where it findeth none; not preferring one Thing before another, without Ground of Difference in them. It doth not fix a Valuation on its Objects, but acknowledgeth it, and taketh it for such as it is in themselves.

Wherefore God cannot have any blind Affection, or Fondness toward any Person grounded on no Reason, or upon any unaccountable Prejudice. No Person can seem amiable, or odious to him, who is not in himself truly such.

This Argument is often used in Scripture; and to assure us of this Truth, it is there frequently affirmed, that God doth search the Hearts, doth try the Spirits, doth weigh the Actions of Men: *The Lord* (saith *Hannah*) *is a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed: All the ways of man* (saith *Solomon*) *are clean in his own eyes, but the Lord weighed the spirits: His eyes* (saith the *Psalmist*) *behold, his eye-lids try the children of men: And, O Lord of Hosts* (saith *Jeremy*) *that judgest righteously, that triest the reins and the heart—Thine eyes are open upon all the ways of the sons of men, to give every one according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings: [I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins, to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings.]*

1 Sam. 2. 3.
Prov. 16. 2.
Psal. 11. 4.
Jer. 11. 20.
20. 12.
Jer. 32. 19.
Jer. 17. 10.

2. God cannot be partial, because he is perfectly righteous, just and holy. This Reason adjoined to the former, doth make up a compleat Demonstration: For partiality doth proceed, either from blindness of Mind, or from perverseness of Will; He therefore, who hath both an exact knowledge of Things, and a perfect rectitude of Will, can no-wise be partial; the one enabling him to judge, the other disposing him to affect Things as they are and deserve; to esteem and love that which is indeed worthy and lovely; to despise and dislike that which is despicable and odious; to have no Opinion, or Affection toward a Person abstracted from all Qualifications; such an one being no special Object of a wise and just either Esteem or Contempt, Love or Hatred.

As these Causes are always inseparably connected (for what is justness, but a disposition of Will, to follow, without Deflexion, the Dictates of Wisdom?) So the Effect must necessarily follow; according to numberless Testimonies in Scripture importing, that *The righteous Lord loveth righteousness; but the wicked, and him that loveth violence, his soul hateth: The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous—but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil.*

Psal. 11. 7.
(7. 11. 33. 4.
45. 7. 146. 8.)
Psal. 11. 5. 5. 5.
Pl. 34. 15, 16.

3. God is impartial, because he is infinitely great and potent; whence all Creatures are in the same Degree inferiour, at the same Distance remote from him; all are equally at his Discretion and Disposal; he hath no need of any; what therefore should incline him to regard one before another, excepting only Goodness, wherein he delighteth? So the Wise-man discourseth, *He that is Lord of all, shall fear no man's person, neither shall he stand in awe of any man's greatness, for he hath made the small and great, and careth for all alike. So Moses did imply, The Lord your God is God of Gods, and Lord of Lords, a great God, a mighty, and a terrible, which regardeth not Persons.*

Sap. 6. 7.
Deut. 10. 17.

Exod. 24. 6, 7.
Numb. 14. 18.
Pf. 86. 5, 15.
103. 8. 145. 8.

4. God is impartial, because he is immensely good and benign ; both intensive-ly in the Degree, and extensively as to the Objects of his Goodness ; so that he favoureth all equally, because all thoroughly, so far as may well be according to their Condition and Capacity ; whence if there be any Difference or Defect, the ground thereof is not in his Nature or Will, but in the different Qualifications of Creatures.

Pf. 145. 9, 16.
Luke 6. 35.
Matt. 5. 45.

There is a double Goodness or Love of God ; one absolute, preceding all regard to Personal Qualities, or Deeds ; the other conditionate, and consequent on special Regards ; in both these God is impartial ; for the first is general and unconfin-
ned, according to that of the Psalmist, *The Lord is good to all, and his mercies are over all his works* ; and those Sayings in the Gospel, *He is kind unto the unthankful, and to the evil ; He maketh his Sun to rise on the evil, and on the good ; and sendeth rain on the just, and on the unjust* ; The second is grounded on special Reasons of the Case, and adapted to the Rules of Justice, demanding it ; according whereto, *The Lord is rich (in mercy) toward all that call upon him. He will fulfill the desire of them that fear him, and preserveth all that love him.*

Rom. 10. 12.
Psalm. 145. 18.
Psalm. 34. 15.
Psalm. 145. 19.
20. 34. 9.
33. 18.

In the first there is no Difference ; in the second the Difference is made by our selves ; being founded in our voluntary Demeanour.

5. God is impartial toward all Persons, because he hath the same (natural and original) Relations toward all.

Mal. 2. 10.
Ephes. 4. 6.

1. He is the Maker and Father of all ; according to that of the Prophet, *Have we not all one Father ? Hath not one God created us ?* And that of the Apostle, *There is One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all* ; He therefore hath the same parental Kindness towards all, the same Tender-
ness for the good of each ; He is not capable of that Imperfection, which is ob-
servable in some Parents, to be fond and indulgent to some Children above others ;
but in his Affection *The rich and poor (as the Wise-man saith) do meet together, the Lord is the maker of them all.*

Job 34. 39.

Hence Job did collect that *God accepteth not the person of Princes, nor regardeth the rich more than the poor ; for (saith he) they are all the work of his hands.*

Job 31. 13,
14, 15.

Hence the same holy Man did infer, that he was obliged to deal fairly with his own Servants, for that God in Judgment would consider their Case no less than his, upon this Account, for *Did not he that made me in the womb, make him ; and did not one fashion us in the womb ?*

Job 31. 15.

Sap. 6. 7.

Hence the Wise-man, who imitated Solomon, did argue an equality of gracious Providence toward all, *He hath made the small and the great, and careth for all alike.*

2. God is the common Lord of all ; and therefore is concerned to protect all with the like Care, to govern all with the same Equity.

Rom. 3. 29.
Rom. 10. 12.

Hence St. Paul gathered that God is indifferently willing to shew Mercy, and dispen-
se Blessings to all People ; to confer the means of Salvation, and to accept pious Endeavours, without distinction of Jew or Gentile ; *Is (saith he) he the God of the Jews only ? Is he not also of the Gentiles ? And, There is therefore no difference between the Jew and the Greek ; for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him.*

Ephes. 6. 9.
1 Tim. 4. 10.

Hence the same Apostle doth urge Masters to be just and kind to their Servants ; for that God as the common Master hath an equal respect to both ; *knowing that your Master also is in Heaven, and there is no respect of Persons with him.*

2. 3.
1 Tim. 2. 4.
2 Pet. 3. 9.

3. God is the Saviour of all ; desiring and designing that all Men should be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth ; being willing that no man should perish, but that all should come to Repentance.

Tit. 3. 11. 2. 11. 1 Joh. 4. 14. Luke 9. 56.
Joh. 3. 17. 12. 47. 2 Cor. 5. 19. 1 Tim. 2. 6. Heb. 2. 9.

Wherefore out of Philanthropy and Love to Mankind he sent his Son to be the Saviour of the world ; to give himself a ransom for all men, to taste death for every man.

And what greater instance could there be of perfect Impartiality ?

So by Reasons from the principal Attributes and Relations of God his Impartiality may be deduced : The same also may be declared from his Proceedings and Dealings with Men. For,

1. God hath propos'd to all Men indifferently the same Terms and Conditions of gaining his Love and Favour, of enjoying his Bounty and Mercy, of obtaining Rewards and Felicity from him. Clem. Paed. l. 4.

The same Laws and Rules of Life are prescribed to all Persons, as Men, and as Christians.

The natural Dictates of Reason, the Precepts of holy Scripture, the great moral Duties of Religion, by Observance whereof God's Favour is retained, and Salvation assured, are of general Concern and common Obligation to all without exception.

God hath not fram'd one Law, or one Gospel for Princes and great Men, another for Peasants and mean Artisans; He hath not chalk'd out one way toward Heaven for the Rich, another for the Poor to walk in; But all, *high and low, rich and poor one with another*, are tied to observe the Precepts of Piety, of Charity, of Justice, of Temperance, Sobriety and Chastity, of Modesty, Humility and Patience; none (great or small) can otherwise than by proceeding in the common Road of virtuous Practice, arrive to Happiness. *He that doeth the will of my Father that is in heaven, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven.* Psal. 49. 21. Matt. 7. 21.

If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments: Enter in through the strait gate; Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life; To them, who by patient continuance in well-doing seek glory and honour and immortality, eternal life will be conferred; These are the grand infallible Maxims, the fix'd irreversible Decrees, expressing the general Duty and Doom of Mankind, according to the eternal Reason of Things, and the declared Will of God Almighty, our Sovereign Governour and Judge. Matt. 19. 17. Matt. 7. 13. Luke 13. 24. Psal. 34. 12. Apoc. 22. 14. Rom. 2. 7.

Whoever it is, that will please God, that will have his Love, that will be happy by his Grace, must humbly submit to God's Will, must faithfully obey God's Laws, must carefully walk in God's Way; from this Course there can be no exemption, no dispensation, no special Privilege for any Person whatever. John 15. 14.

As all Men naturally, by indissoluble Bands of Obligation, are the Subjects and Servants of God; so God indispensibly and inexcusably doth require the same Loyalty and Fidelity, the same Diligence, the same Reverence from all.

Great Men sometimes may live, as if they conceited themselves free from the Obligations which bind other Men; as if they had not Souls (as we poor Mortals have) to be saved, or were to be saved in some other way; as if Obedience to the divine Laws doth not touch them, but only doth belong to the Commonalty; as if they had special Indulgence to live in Pride, Luxury and Sloth, might warrantably practice Injustice, Oppression, Revenge; might *cum privilegio* be Leud and Lascivious, with-hold their Debts, take God's Name in vain, neglect Devotion and the Service of God; but in thus doing they much abuse themselves; for they no less than others are obnoxious to Guilt, and to Punishment for such Misdemeanours against the divine Laws. In truth if there be any difference in the Case, it is only this, that they in all equity, ingenuity and gratitude are obliged to a more strict, more faithful, more diligent Observance of God's Laws; they being more indebted to God for his special Bounty to them; they having larger Talents and Advantages committed to their Trust, their Deportment being of higher Consequence, and most influential on the World, they being liable to render an Account according to that just Rule, *Unto whom much is given, of him much shall be required*; whence their Eminency of Condition doth not excuse them from common Duties, but doth advance their Obligation, will aggravate their Neglect, will enflame their Reckoning, will plunge them deeper into woful Punishment; according to that of the Wise-man, *A sharp judgment shall be to them that are in high places; for mercy will soon pardon the meanest, but mighty men shall be mightily tormented.* Luke 12. 48. Sap. 6. 5, 6.

2. All Persons have the same Means, the same Aids, the same Supports afforded to them, for Ability to perform their Duty, and attain their Happiness.

The Word of God, as the Light of Heaven, doth indifferently Shine to all Men, for instructing their Minds, for directing their Practice, for *guiding their feet in the way of peace.*

The divine Grace is ever at Hand ready to assist all those, who sincerely and seriously do apply themselves to serve God.

Seasonable Comforts are never wanting to support those who need them, and who in their Distress seek them from God, who *healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds*; so that when *The poor man crieth, the Lord heareth him, and saveth him out of his troubles.*

The universal good Spirit of God (the Fountain of Light and Wisdom, of spiritual Power and Strength, of Consolation and Joy) is communicated according to the Needs of Men, and Exigencies of Occasion; preventing them by direction to the right Way, by reclaiming them from ill Courses, by exciting in them good Thoughts and good Desires; quickning their good Resolutions, and assisting in the Pursuit of them; enabling them to resist Temptations, and to combat with their spiritual Adversaries; to such best Purposes the holy Spirit is given to all in needful Seasons and Measures; especially to those who do earnestly seek it, do faithfully use it, do treat it well.

3. God hath provided, and doth propose to all Men the same Encouragements for Obedience, the same Punishments for Transgression; the which being the same in kind do only differ in degree, proportionably to the good Deeds, or bad Demerits of Persons.

God hath appointed one Heaven for all pious and vertuous Persons; of what Nation, of what Rank, of what Condition soever they are; He hath *prepared those things, which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor heart of man conceived, for all that love him.* For all that have *fought the good fight, and kept the faith, and love his appearance, the Lord, the righteous judge, hath laid up a crown of righteousness.*

Immortality of Life, an unfading Crown of Glory, a Kingdom that cannot be shaken, unspeakable Joys, endless Bliss God hath covenanted, and promised to all his faithful Servants; to all who in his way please to accept and embrace them, *ὁ δὲ θάλλων, He that willeth, let him take of the water of life, freely*; And what greater Rewards could there be assigned? What room is there for partiality, where all are capable of the same equally great, because in a manner immense Felicity? *Many (saith our Saviour) shall come from the East and from the West, and from the North, and from the South, and shall sit down with Abraham and with Isaac, and with Jacob in the Kingdom of heaven.*

Lazarus the poor Beggar, shall rest with the illustrious *Moses*, and the noble *Daniel*, with *David*, and *Hezekiah*, and *Josiah*, and all pious Princes in the bosom of *Abraham*. The poor Fishermen, the painful Tent-makers, the sorry Publicans shall reign together with *Constantine*, and *Theodosius*, and all those good Princes, who have faithfully served God, and promoted his Glory. The Rich, well using their Wealth, may obtain that State, *treasuring up to themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life*; The Poor, contentedly bearing their Condition, have a good Title thereto, expressed in those Words, *Blessed be ye poor, for yours is the Kingdom of God.*

On the other hand the same dismal Punishments are threatned to all presumptuous, contumacious, and impenitent Transgressors of God's Law, however dignified or distinguished; be they Princes, or Subjects, Noble or Base, Wealthy or Indigent; the same unquenchable Fire, the same gnawing Worm, the same weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of Teeth; the same utter Darkness; the same burning Lake of Brimstone; the same extreme disconsolate Anguish is reserved for them all: *Depart from me, Go ye cursed into everlasting fire, will be the Doom pronounced on all the workers of iniquity; Indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish will be upon every soul that doth evil.*

No Regard will be had to the Quality of Men in this World; for *the rich man, who was cloathed in purple and fine linnen, and fared sumptuously every day, was not excused from hell, and torment*; there is a *Tophet ordained of old, even for Kings; mighty men shall be mightily tormented, if they have mightily sinned.*

Even present Encouragements of Vertue in this Life, The Joys and Comforts of God's holy Spirit, the sweet Elapses of spiritual Consolation in Devotion, *the peace of God*, and delicious Sense of his Love, the cheerful Satisfaction of a good Conscience, the *Joy in believing* God's Truth, and hoping for Accomplishment of his Promises, the Delight in obeying God's Commandments, the Blessing of God upon good Undertakings and happy Success therein, the *co-operation of all things for good to them who love God*, the supply of all Wants, and satisfaction of all Desires, the experimental Assurance of God's constant Protection and gracious Provi-

Providence over those who fear him, and trust in him, (according to numberless Psal. 145. 19. Declarations and Promises in holy Scripture) are indifferently dispensed to all, 37. 4. 34. 10. who shall use the means to attain them, in way of conscientious Practice.

As correspondently the temporal Discouragements from Sin (crosses, disappointments, vexations, miseries) are without exception allotted to all Transgressors of God's Law, according to many Denunciations therein. Psal. 11. 6. 73. 19. 32. 10. Isa. 48. 22. 57. 20. 54. 17.

4. The Impartiality of God doth appear from his universal Providence, carefully watching over all and every Person, dispensing good Things to each, according to his need, without distinction.

Bonus omnipotens ita curat universos tanquam singulos, ita singulos tanquam solos. Aug. Conf.

Is any Man in extreme Want, his liberal Hand presently doth reach forth a supply; for *He satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry Soul with goodness; He openeth his hand, and satisfieth the desire of every living thing.* Psal. 107. 9. Psal. 145. 16.

Is any Man in Distress? The Lord is ready to afford relief; according to that repeated burthen of the 107th Psalm, *Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he saveth them out of their distresses?* Psal. 107. 9, 13, 19, 28. Psal. 34. 6.

Is any Man engaged in Sin and Guilt? He is patient and long-suffering; not pouring forth his Anger, not with-holding his Mercies; letting his Sun arise, and his Showers descend upon the most unworthy and ingrateful; this he doth so generally, that commonly by apparent events it is not easily discernible, to whom God beareth special Favour; according to that observation of the Preacher, *No man knoweth either love or hatred by all that is before them; all things coming alike to all.* How then can any Man complain of Partiality in him, who exerciseth so unconfined Bounty, Clemency and Patience? Eccl. 9. 1, 2.

If there be any considerable Difference, it is only this, that God hath a peculiar Care of the Poor, the Afflicted, the Oppressed, the Helpless and Disconsolate, who do most need (and thence are most induced to seek) his Succour and Comfort; being also commonly better qualified to receive them; as is frequently declared in Scripture. Psal. 146. 147. 10. 14. 9. 9. 34. 18. Isa. 25. 4.

It is true, that God hath his particular Friends, his Favourites, his Privados, whom he doth specially regard and countenance; upon whom he conferreth extraordinary Boons and Graces; namely those who do love, who do fear, who do trust in, who do honour him, who do obey him; concerning whom it is said, *We know that all things work together for good to them that love God; and The Lord preserveth all those that love him; There is no want to them that fear him; He will fulfill the desire of them that fear him, he also will hear their cry, and will save them: The Lord redeemeth the soul of his servants, and none of them that trust in him, shall be desolate: Them that honour me, I will honour: The Lord loveth the righteous; The Eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry; Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.* Rom. 8. 28. Psal. 145. 20. 31. 23. Psal. 34. 9. Psal. 145. 19. Psal. 34. 22. 1 Sam. 2. 30. Psal. 146. 8. Psal. 34. 15. John 15. 14.

But evidently there is no Partiality in this; for he doth not favour them irrespectively as Persons, but as in Justice specially qualified for Favour, Friendship, Dutifulness, Reverence toward him, being the highest Vertues, and arguing a Mind endued with Dispositions (with Equity, with Ingenuity, with Gratitude, with sober Wisdom, with Love of Truth and Goodness) which demand a Correspondence of Love and Respect from God himself. And as we do not hold a Man partial, who beareth a special Affection and Regard to those, who express good-will, who deal kindly and fairly with them, who serve them faithfully, and pay them due respect; so neither is God partial, if he doth specially bless good Men upon the like Accounts.

Especially considering, that God doth not so favour mere Pretenders, who profess to love and honour him, but do not love true Goodness; fond, superstitious, hypocritical People, who call Lord, Lord, but practice Iniquity; who think to please him by affected Services: who court and flatter him with their Lips; who would bribe him with their Gifts and Sacrifices. Matt. 7. 22. Luke 6. 46. Tit. 1. 16. Matt. 15. 9.

5. All Christians, without Distinction, have the same illustrious Relations, and honourable Privileges, the most great and glorious that can be imagined. Col. 2. 22. Matt. 15. 8.

Of what greater Honour is a Man capable, than to be adopted into the Blood-royal of Heaven, to be called to be one of the Sons of God? *Ye are all the Sons of God, by faith in Christ Jesus. God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, that he might redeem us—and, that we might receive the adoption of Sons.* (Col. 3. 11.) 1 Cor. 12. 13. Gal. 3. 28. 3. 26. 4. 5.

1 John 3. 1.
John 1. 12.
Gal. 4.

Ἰδετε ποταπὸν ἀγάπην. Behold (saith St. John) what love the Father hath given us, that we should be called the Sons of God. This is a Privilege, which God hath given, which Christ hath purchased for us all. And whosoever received him, he gave them ἐξουσίαν παντός, (this Power, this Privilege, this Advantage) that they should become the sons of God.

To what higher Dignity can any one pretend, than to be Heir of a Kingdom? By the most infallible Assurance that can be; by Covenant, by Promise of God; such are all good Christians, God's Children; for if sons, then heirs (saith the Apostle) heirs of God, co-heirs with Christ: Heirs of God's Kingdom; for, Hearken (saith St. James) my beloved Brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the Kingdom, which he hath promised to them that love him? Inherit the Kingdom prepared for you. Fear not, little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you a Kingdom. I appoint unto you a Kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me.

To what higher Pitch can the most ambitious Soul aspire, than to be a King? Such, St. John saith that our Lord hath constituted every good Christian; *παράκλητοι*, not of a carnal, an earthly, a temporal Kingdom (which is unstable, is subject to various Chances and Crosses, cannot endure long, or last any considerable Time) but of a spiritual, a celestial, an eternal Kingdom, which cannot be shaken; which hath continual Rest, Peace, Joy. We are by God called unto his Kingdom and Glory. —translated into the Kingdom of his own dear Son. To be the Brethren of Christ; who is the Sovereign Lord of Glory, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords.

Is it not a considerable Honour to be the Friends of our Lord? So is every poor Soul, which hath the Conscience to serve him faithfully; for, *Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you.*

All are Citizens, free Denizens of the Heavenly Commonwealth; *συμπολίται τοῦ αἰῶνος* — 6. All Men are liable to the same Judgment, at the same Tribunal, before that one impartial, inflexible Judge, who cannot be corrupted with Gifts, or dazzled with Shews, or moved by any sinister Regards.

All Persons must stand before that Bar upon equal Ground; without any Advantage; according to that Representation of St. John; *I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God, and the books were opened --- and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.*

The greatest Monarchs, the mightiest Potentates, the most redoubtable Warriors, and successful Conquerours (the man, who made the earth to tremble, that did shake Kingdoms;) that made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof; who affected to ascend into heaven, and to exalt his throne above the stars of God, to ascend above the heights of the clouds, and to be like the most high.

There shall they stand bare and divested of all their Phantastry; their splendid Pomp, their numerous Retinue, their Guards, their Parasites.

No Consideration there will be had of their windy Titles, of their gay Attire, and glittering Pomp.

No Respect will be had to the Dread of their Name, to the Fame of their Prowess; to that spurious Glory, for which they unsetled Mankind, and overturned the World; their Actions will be strictly scann'd according to the Rules of God's Law, and common Equity.

They will be put to answer for all the Violences and Outrages, for all the Spoils and Rapines, for all the Blood and Slaughters, for all the Ruins, Devastations and Desolations their cruel Ambition hath caused; for all the Sins they have committed, and all the Mischiefs they have done.

They who now have so many Flatterers and Adorers, will not then find one Advocate to plead for them.

Thus it may appear that God is impartial.

But there are divers obvious Exceptions against this Doctrine. As,

Obj. 1. Is it not apparent that the Gifts of God are distributed with great Inequality?

Doth not one swim in Wealth and Plenty, while another coucheth under the Burthen of extreme Want and Penury?

Are

Are not some perched aloft in high Dignity, while others crawl upon the Ground, and grovel in despicable Meanness?

Are not some *clothed with purple and fine linnen, and fare deliciously every day*; Luke 16. 19, while others scarce find rags to cover them, and *lie at the door begging for relief*? 20, —

Do not some thrive and prosper in their Affairs, while others are disappointed and crossed in their undertakings?

Was is not truly observed of some Persons (and those least deserving good Fortune) *They are inclosed in their own fatness—Their eyes stand out with fatness, they have more than heart could wish?* Psal. 17. 10. 73. 7. Job 21. 7. 12. 6.

And whence doth this difference come, but from God's Hand; *who* (as the Apostle asketh) *maketh thee to differ* from another, but God the Disposer of all things? Jer. 12. 1. Hab. 1. 16. 1 Cor. 4. 7.

To this Exception I answer:

1. That temporal Things are so inconsiderable, that they scarce deserve to come into the Balance, or to be computed; for they have but the same Proportion to spiritual Things, as Time hath to Eternity; or a finite to an infinite; which is none at all. Rom. 8. 18. Λογίζομαι γὰρ ὅτι ἐκ ἀγίας 2 Cor. 4. 17.

What Partiality therefore is there, if God in Mercy and Patience bestow on bad Men a farthing in the temporal *Consolations* of this Life (if the universal Father give a small *Portion in this life* to untoward Children) while he reserveth infinite Millions for his obedient Children? Luke 6. 24. 16. 25. Psal. 17. 14.

2. The Goods of Fortune commonly are dispensed not by a special Hand of God, but according to the general Course of Providence: And what Partiality is he guilty of, who scattereth Money into a Crowd of poor People; although in scrambling some get more than other; and often the worst (being most bold and fierce) do get most?

3. Indeed the receiving those Gifts, is no sign of God's special Regard; as the Preacher well observed; *No man knoweth either love or hatred by all that is before them; All things come alike to all, there is one event to the righteous and to the wicked.* Eccles. 9. 1, 2.

4. God (as St. Austin saith) purposely doth sparingly deal these things to good Men, and freely bestoweth them on bad Men, to shew how little we ought to value them; how much inferiour they are to spiritual Goods. For surely he would give the best Things to his Friends, and the worst to his Enemies.

5. Even temporal Gifts are dispensed with a very even Hand; for, if barring injudicious Fancy and vulgar Opinion, we rightly prize things, we compare the Conveniencies and Inconveniencies of each State, it will be hard to judge which hath the Advantage.

Wealth hath more Advantages for Pleasure; but it hath also more Cares, more Fears, more Crosses, more Dangers, more Troubles, more Temptations.

It hath more Plenty, but withall it hath less Safety, less Ease, less Liberty, less Quiet, less real Enjoyment.

Set the Distraction of the rich Man's Mind against the Toil of the poorest Man's Body; the nauseous Surfeits of one against the griping Hunger of the other.

That which really doth constitute a State happy and content, may be common to both, or wanting to either, as the Person is disposed.

6. The Goods of Fortune are not purely Gifts, but Talents deposited in trust for God's Service, for which a proportionable Return is expected; so that he that hath less of them, hath a less Burthen to bear, and an easier Account to render.

7. Many Gifts are not dispensed with personal Regard, but for publick Good; and therefore all have an Interest in them.

The Wealth, the Power, the Reputation, the Prosperity of a Prince, of a Nobleman, of a Gentleman are not his, but his Neighbour's; for governing, for protecting, for encouraging, for assisting whom they are conferred; the World not being able to subsist in Order and Peace without subordinate Ranks, and without answerable Means to maintain them.

Obj. 2. It is apparent, that God dispenseth his Grace, the Light of Knowledge, and Means of Salvation very unequally; some Nations living in the clear Sunshine of the Gospel, while others sit in darkness and the shadow of death; whole Nations being detained in barbarous and brutish Ignorance. Luke 1. 69. Matt. 4. 16. Eph. 4. 18. 2. 1. Tit. 3. 3. 1 Pet. 4. 3.

To

To answer this Exception fully, would require much Discourse ; it being a dark and difficult Point ; but briefly we may say :

1. That God dispenseth Measures of Grace, according to a just, yet inscrutable Wisdom, knowing what use will be made thereof, and what *Fruit* Men will *bear*. It may therefore be a Favour not to dispense Light to them, who are not prepared to embrace and improve it well.

2. No Man can tell what God doth in preparation, and what Obstructions are made by Men to his Grace.

3. As lower Means of Grace are conferred, so proportionably less Returns are expected.

4. How hard soever it may be to descry the Reason of God's Proceedings in this Case, yet assuredly it is just, and our Ignorance of it should not prejudice the Belief of those general Truths, which are so plainly declared, concerning the universal Benignity, and impartial Equity of God.

Obj. 3. Is it not in holy Scripture sometimes asserted, that God doth act arbitrarily, and absolutely ; dispensing his Bounty and Mercy, without regard to any quality in Men, or Deed committed by them, either in whole, or in Proportion.—God saith, *I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy* — and, *Is it not lawfull for me to do what I will with mine own ?*

Rom. 9. 15.
Matt. 20. 15.

Is it not a plain Instance of this Dealing alledg'd by St. Paul concerning *Jacob* and *Esau*, that *before the children were born, or had done either good or evil, God said, the elder shall serve the younger ;* and in regard thereto (in the Prophet, *Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.*

Rom. 9. 13.

We answer briefly, that

Such Expressions do import, not that God acteth absolutely in the thing it self, but *quoad nos* ; not that he acteth without Reason, but upon Reasons (transcending our Capacity, or our Means to know it) incomprehensible or undiscernible to us ; not that he can give no Account, but is not obliged to render any to us : That the Methods of his Providence commonly are inscrutable ; that his Proceedings are not subject to our Examination and Censure ; that his acting doth sufficiently authorize and justify it self ; that it is high Presumption and Arrogance for us to scan, sift, or contest, or cavil at the Equity or Wisdom of God's acting.

Rom. 11. 33.

Rom. 9. 20.

That God doth not act according to Necessity, but is free in dispensing his Mercy, and applying it to any Person, so that they have nothing to challenge upon account of their own Deserts or Works ; but must refer all to his mere Bounty.

However, there can be nothing in these Mysteries of Predestination and Providence, which really doth subvert an Assertion so often clearly expressed, and so well grounded in Reason, or the Consideration of God's Nature, Attributes, ordinary way of acting, &c.

Whatever Expressions are repugnant thereto in sound, whatever Instances (depending on occult Causes) in appearance do cross it ; it yet must stand, that God is impartially merciful, benign, just, &c.

(Isa. 49. 1, 5.)

Jer. 1. 5.

Luke 1. 15.

Gal. 1. 5.

Obj. 4. Had not *Jeremy*, *St. John Baptist*, *St. Paul* absolute Favours and Graces conferred on them, who were *sanctified*, and separated from the Womb to be Prophets and Apostles ?

Jer. 1. 10.

Luke 1. 16.

Acts 9. 15.

26. 16 —

Resp. These Favours were in Design not so much particular, and personal, as general and publick ; those Persons being raised up by God upon Occasions as needful Instruments (*Elect vessels*) of his Providence, to instruct Men, and to reduce them to God ; so that God in raising up such extraordinary Persons, did express his common Goodness to Mankind.

The like may be said of that special Favour which was vouchsafed to the holy Virgin, who was *κεχαριτωμένη*, and *blessed among women*, for the general Good of Mankind.

Καίτε κεχα-
ριτωμένην.
Luke 1. 28.

The Consideration of this Point is very useful, and may dispose us to many Sorts of good Practice.

1. No Man should presume upon God's dealing with him more favourably than with others ; as if he were a Darling, or Favourite ; that God will indulge him in the Commission of any Thing prohibited, or in Omission of any Duty.

No Man should indulge himself in any thing, upon a Conceit, that God will indulge him, or oversee his Errors; and that, in this Sense, *He seeth not iniquity in Jacob.*

No Man should be puffed up with Conceit, that God hath a singular Regard to him. For all such Conceits are groundless and vain; in them Men do miserably delude themselves.

No Man can otherwise sound any Assurance of God's special Love to him, than upon a good Conscience; testifying, that he doth sincerely love God, and endeavour faithfully to obey his Commandments. 1 Joh. 3. 19. 21.

3. No Man should despair of God's Favour; seeing God hath no particular Averſation from any; but every Person hath the same Grounds of Hope.

If we can buckle our Hearts to observe our Duty, we may be sure to be accepted.

If thou doſt well, ſhalt thou not be accepted?

Gen. 4. 7.

4. No Man should be discouraged for his Condition, or Fortune. Since in allotting it to him God had no Disfavour, nor did intend him ill.

God hath no less regard to him, than to Persons of the most high, wealthy, prosperous State.

5. No Man should repine, murmur or complain of God's Dealing, as if he were unkindly used, more than others. For there is no such Thing. God deal-eth alike kindly with all.

6. No Man, upon Account of his Rank, Wealth, or worldly Advantages should boast or pride himself; seeing thence he partaketh no more, than his meanest, and poorest Neighbour, of the principal Advantage, God's Favour.

7. No Man, upon such Accounts, should despise his Neighbour, *the brother of low degree*: For upon these Accounts it appeareth, that the *Wiseman* saith truly, that *He is void of wisdom, who despiseth his neighbour*; seeing no Man can be despicable, whom God regardeth; seeing God (as *Elihu* saith) *is mighty, and despiseth not any*; seeing the meanest Person standeth on equal Terms with the greatest in the Eye of God. Jam. 1. 9. O ταπεινός. Prov. 11. 12. 14. 21. Job 36. 5. (Jam. 2. 6.)

8. Great Men should not take themselves for another Sort of Creatures, or another Race of Men than their poor Neighbours; that the World is theirs, and all Things are for them; that they may do what they please; that they are exempted from Laws, which oblige others; for in moral and spiritual Accounts they are upon a level with others. Quorum satis cælum omne vacavit. Luc. lib. 7.

They are but Fellow-Subjects, and Fellow-Servants with others; all accountable to the same Master.

9. Superiours hence should be moved to deal fairly, gently, and courteously with Inferiours; seeing these are their Fellow-Servants; equally considerable as themselves with the great Master of the Family.

This is the Use to which St. Paul applieth the Consideration;

• *Masters give unto your servants that which is just and equal, knowing that ye have a Master in Heaven—Ye Masters do the same things unto them* (that is, be conscientiously good to them, as they are faithful to you) *forbearing threatening; knowing that your Master also is in Heaven, neither is there respect of persons with him.* Col. 4. 1. 3. ult. Eph. 6. 9.

10. This Consideration should preserve us from Superstition, or thinking to please or satisfy God, win his Favour, or appease his Displeasure, by uncouth Ways, which he hath not prescribed to all Men; to corrupt him by our Sacrifices and Oblations; our flatteries, glozings, colloquings with him; so that he will indulge us in any bad thing, or excuse us from our true Duty, in regard to those affected Services.

We do herein but abuse our selves; for he will not approve or accept us upon any other Account, than of discharging our Duty, being truly righteous and good. Coloss. 2. — Mic. 6. 7, 8.

11. It is Matter of Comfort and Satisfaction to a Man, who is conscious of his Sincerity, that (whatever his Condition and Circumstances be) that God will have a fair Regard thereto, and will not reject him.

It was so to *Job*; *Doth not God see my ways, and count all my steps? — Let me be weighed in an even balance, that God may know my integrity.* Job 31. 4—6.

Jam. 2. 1, 9.
Prov. 28. 21st

12. The Consideration of this Point should keep us from partial Respects of Men. Not to admire the State of great Men, nor to yield them undue deferences (in prejudice to meaner Persons, making greater difference than there is ground for,) not to flatter or flatter them in an immoderate measure, or unbeseeming manner.

Οὐ μέλει σοι
περὶ ἀδελφός.

Matt. 22. 16.

Θαυμάζειν

περὶ σωπᾶ.

Jude.

Levit. 19. 15.

Deut. 1. 17.

16. 19.

Prov. 24. 23.

16. 5. 28. 21.

Jam. 2. 9.

This is that which St. *James* doth urge in his 2d *Chapter* ; as a very unequal Thing.

We should imitate God ; we should consider that our Opinions and Affections should resemble his.

As in exterior Judgment no respect is to be had to the rich above the poor ; so neither in the interior Judgment or Esteem of our Mind ; to which St. *James* seemeth to apply the Law ; *If ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and ye are convinced of the law as transgressors.*

13. This should keep us from envying at those who have more worldly Advantages.

14. It should keep us from being offended, or scandalized, or perverted into false Notions of God, upon occasion of any mysterious Points, or hard Expressions importing absolute and arbitrary Proceedings of God, in Predestination or Providence. For however they are to be understood, they cannot derogate from the impartial Goodness and Justice of God.

15. This Consideration should engage us readily to pay due Respect and Reverence to Princes, to Magistrates, to all our Superiours.

For hence we see, that the Reason why we are commanded to honour and fear them, is, not their worldly Grandeur of Wealth or Power (things of small Consideration with God) but it standeth on a more solid Ground, their sacred Relations to God, as his Representatives and Officers ; who in his Name and Behalf do administer Justice, and protect Right and Innocence, encourage Vertue, maintain Order and Peace in the World.

Though God doth not favour their Persons as rich and mighty ; yet he regardeth his own Character imprinted on them, he regardeth his Honour and Interest concerned in their respect, he regardeth the publick Good of Mankind, which they are constituted to promote. He considers them as the *Ministers of his Kingdom*, and Instruments of conveying his Benefits to Mankind.

Whence he *giveth salvation to Kings*, he by his Law, and by his Providence doth guard and secure them from Violence, from Contempt, from Disrespect.

Rom. 14. 4.
Εἰς ἀγάπην

In honouring them, we honour the Authority of God ; and the Character of Divinity stamped on them ; we serve our selves, for whose sake they are constituted, for whose Good they watch.

It may also engage us the more gladly and fully to yield them their due Respect, to consider, that their Condition is not invidious ; or their Case better than other Mens ; seeing they are accountable to God for the Advantages of it ; seeing that God hath no regard to them upon account of that Greatness which dazzleth our Eyes : Seeing that for all the Burthens they sustain, for all the Cares they take, for all the Pains they endure, for our Good and publick Service, they can receive so inconsiderable a Recompence from us.

Finally,

It should engage us to be very careful of our Ways, and diligent in our Obedience ; seeing there is no other way possible of pleasing God, of gaining his Favour and Friendship, of appeasing his Displeasure, of standing upright, and coming off well in his Judgment ; this is St. *Peter's* Inference, with which I conclude ;

1 Pet. 1. 17.

If ye call on the Father, who without respect of Persons judgeth according to every Man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear.

SERMON XXXIX.

The Doctrine of Universal Redemption asserted and explained.

I TIM. IV. 10.

The living God ; who is the Saviour of all Men, especially of those that believe.

Θεὸς γὰρ πολλῶν ὄντων, ἐφ' ὧν σωμὸς ἐστίν, ἐδὲν ἑτοῦς ὡς τὸ πᾶντων εὐεργετήν ἰδωτά-
lov. Naz. O-
rat. 26.

THERE are Two Points of Doctrine here plainly asserted by St. Paul, which I shall endeavour to explain, and to apply : One, that God is the Saviour of all Men ; Another, that he is peculiarly the Saviour of the faithful. For the *First*,

God in many Respects may truly be conceived and called *the Saviour of all men* ; for the Word *save* doth in a large acceptation denote the conferring any kind of good : As implying a removal of Need, or Indigence. Whence God is *the Saviour of all men*, as the universal preserver and upholder of all Things in their Being and natural State, as it is in the Psalm : *Thou, Lord, savest man and beast*, or, as the general Benefactor, who is good to all, and whose mercies are over all his works ; who maketh his Sun to rise upon the good and bad, rains upon the just and unjust, is kind and benign even to the ingrateful and evil : Or, as the common assistant, protector, and deliverer of all Men, who in Need or Distress have recourse unto him for Succour and Relief, according to what is said in the Psalms ; *The Lord is a refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble : The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon him. They cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and he saved them out of their distresses.*

Psal. 36. 6.
Old Transl.
and the LXX.
σώσεις, or σώ-
ζεις.
Psal. 145. 9.
Matt. 5. 46.
Luke 6. 5.

Psal. 9. 9.
145. 18.
146. 7, &c.
107. 13, &c.
68, 19. 20.

In these kinds of Senses especially respecting natural and temporal Good, it is manifest that *God is the Saviour of all men*. But that he is in this Place termed such in a higher Sense, with regard to Mercies and Blessings of a more excellent Kind, and greater Consequence (to Mercies and Blessings of a spiritual Nature, and relating to the eternal State of Men) may from several Considerations appear.

1. For that according to Apostolical Use the word *Saviour*, *Save*, *Salvation*, are wont to bear an Evangelical Sense, relating to the Benefits by our Lord Jesus Christ procured, purchased, and dispensed, concerning the future State of Men.

2. For that questionless St. Paul doth here intend God to be *Saviour* of the Faithful in this higher Sense, and consequently he means him in the same Sense (although not in the same Degree and Measure, or not altogether to the same Effects and Purposes) a *Saviour of all men*.

3. Because 'tis plain that in other Places of Scripture, like and parallel to this, such a Sense is designed. As, where in this very Epistle, we are enjoined to pray for all men, for this reason ; For (saith St. Paul) *this is good and acceptable before God our Saviour, who would have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge (or acknowledgment) of the truth* ; where σωτήρ ἡμῶν, the Saviour of us, seems to denote the Saviour of us as men (that Interpretation best suiting with the Argument St. Paul useth) however it is expressed that God is, according to desire or intention, the Saviour of all Men, in reference to their spiritual and eternal Advantage ; as willing that all Men should embrace the Gospel ; which is farther most evidently confirmed by the Words immediately following ; *For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and Man, the Man Christ Jesus.*

4. Because according to the tenour of Scripture, and the analogy of Christian Doctrine, St. Paul's assertion thus interpreted is true, as our subsequent Discourse may declare.

1 Tim. 1. 1.
2. 4.

2 Tim. 1. 9.
Tit. 2. 10. 13.

2. 4. 1. 3.
1 Tim. 3. 16.

Acts. 20. 28.
Rom. 9. 5.

5. I might add, That *the living God* in our Text may very well be understood and expounded to be our Lord *Jesus* himself; not only as partaking of the divine Nature, but as exhibited in the Gospel; the Word incarnate, who as such may seem commonly by St. Paul to be styled, *God our Saviour*; *God manifested in the flesh*; *God, that purchased the Church with his own Blood*; *Christ, who is God over all, blessed for evermore*. However it from the Premises is sufficiently apparent, that God's being *the Saviour of all men* doth relate unto our Saviour *Jesus* his Undertakings and Performances for the Salvation of all Men; since God in a sense Evangelical is no otherwise said to save, than in concurrence with what *Jesus* did undertake and perform; than as designing, ordering, accepting, prosecuting and accomplishing our Lord's Performances; *Jesus* being the Conduit through which all Evangelical Mercies and Blessings are from God convey'd and dispens'd to Mankind. So that

Eph. 1. 3. 6. God being *the Saviour of Mankind*, is either directly and immediately, or by Equivalence and in Consequence the same with *Jesus* being *the Saviour of all men*.

That our Lord *Jesus* is *the Saviour of all men*; or that the most signal of his saving Performances do in their Nature and their Design respect all Men, as meant for, as conducing and tending to all Mens Salvation, yea and as in their own Nature (supposing Men's due and possible Concurrence with them) effectually productive of their Salvation; that I say this ancient Catholick Point of Doctrine (the which we profess to believe, when with the Church we say in the *Nicene Creed*——*Who for us Men, and for our Salvation came down from Heaven*, and the which particularly our Church in it's Catechism, in the Ministration of Baptism, and in the Communion, doth most evidently and expressly declare it self to embrace) is very true, many full and clear Testimonies of Scripture do shew, many Reasons grounded on Scripture do prove; the which we shall first touch, and then farther both illustrate and enforce the Truth, by declaring upon what Accounts, or in what respects our Lord is the Saviour of all Men; as also by an application to Practice, declarative of its Usefulness and Subserviency to the Purposes of Piety. For immediate Testimonies:

1. *Jesus* is called the *Saviour of the World*; who was sent and came into the World to save the World; whose chief Performances were designed and directed to the Salvation of the World; *We have heard and known* (said the Men of *Samarita*) *that this is truly the Saviour of the World, the Christ*. *We have seen and testified* (saith St. *John*) *that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the World* (that World, of which it is said: *He was in the World, and the World was made by him, and the World knew him not*.) And; *God sent his Son into the World, not to judge* (or not to condemn) *the World, but that the World by him should be saved* (that World, where- of a great Part he in effect would both judge and condemn for Unbelief and Disobedience, he did come primarily upon intent to save.) And, *The bread which I shall give, is* (saith he) *my flesh, which I will give for the life of the World*: And, *Behold* (saith the Baptist) *the Lamb of God which taketh away the Sins of the World*. And, *God was in Christ, reconciling the World unto himself, not imputing their Offences* (saith St. Paul) *to the World*, which otherwise he expresseth by *τὸ πᾶν*, by him to reconcile all things unto himself:) And, *He is a propitiation not only for our sins, but for the sins of the whole world* (the whole World, in contradiction from all Christians, to whom St. *John* speaketh in that Place of his Catholick Epistle; that *ἡσὺν ὁλῶν*, of which he saith in that same Epistle, *ἡσὺν ὁλῶν ἐν τῷ πονηρῷ καὶ τῷ*, the whole World lieth in wickedness.) In all which Places that the World according to its ordinary acception (and as every Man would take it at first hearing) doth signify the whole Community of Mankind, comprehending Men of all Sorts and Qualities, good and bad, Believers and Infidels (not in a new, unusual Sense, any special restrained World of some Persons, particularly regarded, or qualified) will, I suppose, easily appear to him, who shall without Prejudice or Partiality attend to the common Use thereof in Scripture, especially in St. *John*, who most frequently applieth it as to this, so to other Cases, or Matters.

2. The Object of our Saviour's Undertakings and Intentions is described by Qualities and Circumstances agreeing unto all Men. All the Sons of *Adam* are by Disobedience in a lost Condition (lost in Error and Sin, lost in Guilt and Condemnation,

nation, lost in Trouble and Misery) and, *The Son of Man* (saith *He* himself) Matt. 18. 11. *came to save,* τὸ ἀπολωλός, *that which was lost* (or whatever was lost.) *All Men* Rom. 3. 23. *have sinned,* (saith St. Paul) *and are fallen short of the glory of God*; and, 'Tis, 1 Tim. 1. 15. *a faithful saying* (saith the same Apostle) *and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the World to save sinners.* God commended his love to us, *that we being yet sinners Christ died for us.* All Men naturally are weak, and wicked; Ephes. 2. 1, *are in a State of alienation and enmity toward God* And, *Even when we were* Rom. 5. 6, 10. *without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly: When we were enemies, were reconciled to God by the death of his Son: Christ once suffered for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous.* All Men have Souls, and Lives expos'd to Misery and Ruin: And, *The Son of Man* (so he assures us) *came not to destroy, but to save the souls* (or lives) of Men. Those Propositions in form, respecting an indefinite Object, are according to vulgar use equipollent to those, wherein the Object is expressed universally. However,

3. They are interpreted by others, expressed in terms as general, and comprehensive as can be; such as these Texts contain: *The living God, who is the Saviour of all Men, especially of the faithful* (of all Men universally, not only of the faithful, though chiefly of them.) *God our Saviour would have all Men to be saved*; 1 Tim. 4. 10. *He is the mediator of God and Men, who gave himself a ransom for all Men*; 1 Tim. 2. 4, 5. *God hath shut up all Men under sin, that he might have mercy upon all.* *The love of Christ constraineth us, judging this, that if one died for all, then are all dead; and he died for all, that they who live may not live to themselves, but to him that died for them, and rose again.* *The saving grace of God hath appeared to all men* (or the Grace of God, which is saving to all Men, hath appeared, Tit. 2. 11. *ἐπεφάνη ἡ χάρις Θεοῦ ἡ σωτήριος πάντων ἀνθρώπων.*) *He tasted death for every Man.* *He is the true light, that enlighteneth every Man coming into the World.* Which Propositions do sufficiently determine the Extent of our Saviour's saving Performances.

4. Farther yet, to exclude any limitation or diminution of these so general Terms (at least to exclude any limitation in regard to all the Members of the visible Church, which are or have been incorporated thereinto) it is expressed, that our Saviour's Undertakings did respect even those, who (by their own Default) might lose the Benefit of them, and who in effect should not be saved. For, of those false Teachers, who introduc'd pernicious Heresies, 'tis said, that they *denied the Lord, who bought them.* And St. Paul implies, that by a scandalous Example a weak brother, for whom Christ died, being induced to sin, might be destroyed. Va illis, qui autorem propria salutis negaverunt. Ambr. Pl. 39. 2 Pet. 2. 1. 1 Cor. 8. 11. Rom. 14. 15. Heb. 10. 29. *And by thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died.* And, *Do not* (saith *He* again) *by thy eating destroy him, for whom Christ died.* And, the Apostle to the Hebrews signifies concerning Apostates, that they do trample upon the Son of God, and pollute the Blood of Christ, by which they are sanctified.

5. The Supposition thereof is the Ground of Duty, and an Aggravation of Sin.

Thus doth the Holy Scripture in Terms very direct and express declare this Truth, indeed so clearly and fully, that scarce any other Point of Christian Doctrine can alledge more ample or plain Testimony of Scripture for it; whence it is wonderful, that any pretending Reverence to Scripture should dare (upon Consequences of their own devising) to question it; and many Reasons confirming the same, may be deduced thence.

1. The impulsive Cause, which moved GOD to design the sending our Lord for to undertake what he did is expressed to be Philanthropy; or Love to Mankind: But (saith St. Paul) *when the kindness and love of God our Saviour unto man appeared*—Tit. 3. 4. *according to his mercy he saved us.* So God loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son. God hereby commends his love unto us, that we as yet being sinners, Christ died for us. It was not a particular fondness of Affection (such whereof no particular ground can be assigned or imagined) but an universal (infinitely rich and abundant) Goodness, Mercy and Pity toward this eminent Part of his Creation sunk into Distress and lamentable Wretchedness, which induced God to send his Son for the Redemption of Mankind.

2. God declares himself impartial (most particularly) in this Case; that as all Men in regard to him stand alike related, and are in the same Condition, so he proceeds with indifferent Affection, and upon the same Terms with all. He is

equally the Lord and Maker of all Men; and all Men are equally involved in Guilt, and exposed to Ruin; upon which grounds St. Paul interreth, that as to God's regard of Man's Salvation, there is no Difference between Jews and Greeks; and by Parity of Reason there can be none between any other Sorts of Persons, antecedently to God's merciful Intentions. *There is* (saith He) *no respect of Persons with God* (as to preparing the Capacities and Means, to propounding the Terms and Conditions of Salvation for about these he discourses) for, *Is he* (saith the Apostle, assigning the Reason of that assertion) *the God of the Jews only, and not of the Gentiles? No: There is no difference* (saith He) *of Jew and Greek, for there is the same Lord of all, being rich* (rich in Mercy and Bounty) *unto all that call upon him*; that is by Consequence simply unto all; for St. Paul implies, that God therefore provided that all Men should have the Means of calling upon him imparted to them; for that, *how should they call upon him without Faith*; and *how should they believe without Preachers, and how should there be Preachers, if they were not sent?* Whence he infers (against the Sense of those Jews, with whom he disputes) that it was necessary that the Apostles should have a Commission to preach unto all. And, *The righteousness of God by the faith of Christ is manifested unto all, and over all that believe, for there is no difference*; for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God: The relation of God is the same to all Men; (He is the God and Lord of all) the State and Need of all Men are the same; there is therefore no difference, excepting that consequent one, which compliance or non-compliance with the Conditions offered unto all doth induce. 'Tis true in this respect, what the Wise man saith, ὁ πάντων δεσπότης ὁμοίως προνοεῖ πᾶσι τῶν. He, that is, Lord of all, careth (or provideth) for all alike; and what Clemens Alexandrinus says, as to this particular, *All things lie equally for all from God; so that no Man can complain of him*; as partial to some, and deficient to others.

Sap. 6. 7.
Πᾶσι πάντα ἴσα καὶ τὰ παρὰ τὸ θεῶν,
καὶ ὅτιν αὐτὸς ἀμεμῆς. Clem. Alexand.
Strom. 7. p. 301.

3. We may observe, that the Undertakings and Performances of our Lord are for Nature and Extent compared with those of Adam (who was τύπος τοῦ μέλλοντος, a type of him that was to come;) As Adam, being a representative of Mankind, did by his Transgression involve all Men in Guilt, and subject them to Condemnation; provoked God's Wrath, and drew the Effects thereof upon us; brought all Men under the Slavery of Sin, and Necessity of Death; so was our Lord the Proxy of Mankind, and by his Performances in our Behalf did undo for our Advantage, what the former did to our Prejudice; by his entire Obedience, expiating the common Guilt, suspending the fatal Sentence, pacifying God's Wrath, reducing Righteousness, and restoring Life to all that would embrace them; so doth St. Paul at large (in the 5th Chapter of his Epistle to the Romans) propound and prosecute the Comparison; closing his Discourse thus: *Therefore as by the offence of one man Judgment came upon all Men to condemnation, so by the Righteousness of one, the Free-gift came upon all Men to justification of Life.* As Guilt, Wrath and Death forementioned were the Fruits of what Adam did, falling upon all; so Pardon, Grace and Life were (in design) the Effects of what our Saviour performed relating unto all. Yea, The same Comparison St. Paul seems to intimate in his second Epistle to the Corinthians, where he saith, That if one died for all, then are all Men dead; that is, Christ's dying for all Men, implies all Men in a State of Condemnation and Subjection to Death; and that Inference supposes the Performances of the first and second Adam to be in their Nature and primary Effects co-extended and commensurate. The same St. Paul seemeth in express Terms to say, *All Men have sinned, and are fallen short* (or are destitute) *of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace* (or favour) *by the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.* (All Men are justified, that is, according to God's favourable Intention and Design.) Yea, the very Reason, why God permitted Sin and Death to prevail so universally is intimated to be his Design of extending a Capacity of Righteousness and Life unto all; so St. Paul tells us: God hath shut up all Men under Sin, that he might have Mercy upon all. And particularly, that by Virtue of Christ's Performances Death is abolished, and Immortality is conferred upon all Men, St. Paul most expressly teacheth us; *For* (saith he) *as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all men be made alive.*

1 Cor. 15. 22.
2 Tim. 1. 10.
Rom. 6. 23.

I observe that *Prosper* (an eager disputant about Points allied to this) several times confesseth, that *Christ* may be most rightly affirmed to have been crucified for the Redemption of the whole World, especially upon two Accounts, for his true Susception of human Nature, and for the common Perdition of all Men in the first Man; we have touched the latter, let us add, That

Cum itaque rectissime dicatur Salvator pro totius mundi redemptione crucifixus, propter veram naturam humanam susceptionem, & propter communem in primo homine omnium perditionem, &c. Prof. ad Gall. c. 9.

4. Our *Saviour* assuming our Nature, and partaking of our Flesh, *being made in the likeness of Men, and found in fashion as a Man*, yea endued with the Passions and Infirmities of Man's Nature, exposed to the Tribulations and Inconveniences of Man's Life, did thereby allie himself, and put on a fraternal Relation unto all Men. Forasmuch saith the Apostle to the *Hebrews*, as *Children* (the Children he means of the same Father, or Brethren; as the Tenour of his Discourse makes evident) are *Partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same*; that is, graciously designing to become a Brother to the Children of Men, he assumed all that was proper to Man's Nature. God, saith St. Paul, made *πάντων τῶν ἀνθρώπων, the whole Nation or Race of Men, dwelling upon the face of the earth, of one Blood*; and of that one Blood, our Saviour was pleased to take Part, entitling us thereby to a *Confanguinity* with him; and it was a Title of his, which he seemed to affect and delight in, *the Son of Man*. He being such did sanctifie our Nature, by the closest Conjunction thereof to the Divine Nature, and rendring it more than a Temple of the Divinity; he dignified it, and (as that Apostle intimateth) advanced it above the angelical Nature by an alliance to God himself; he thereby not only became qualified to mediate between God and Man, and capable to transact that great Business of Man's Salvation; but was engaged, and in a manner obliged to do it; for as he was *a Man*, he surely was endued with the best of human Affections, universal Charity and Compassion, which would excite him to promote the Welfare of all; as he was *a Man*, he was subject to the common Law of Humanity, which obliges to endeavour the common Benefit of Men. As he was *a Brother* in Relation, so he could not, he would not be otherwise in Affection; he is not to be conceived deficient in Performance of the Offices suitable to that Condition. That good-will which he requires us to bear toward all Men indifferently, good and bad, Friends and Enemies, he questionless did bear himself in the highest Degree, and to the utmost Extent; the general Beneficence, which in his Conversation and Practice he did express, doth signifie how large his Desires and Intentions were in regard to the Welfare of Men; so that we may thence well aver with St. Ambrose: *Incarnationis Dei mysterium est universæ salutis creaturæ*; The mystery of God's Incarnation doth respect the Salvation of all Mankind, according to his Desire and Design.

Ἡ περὶ σαρκὸς ἐκ ἐδδλας τὸ λόγον φύσιν Κύριον ὄντα, ἀλλὰ μᾶλλον ἐκ δειρώσεως ἢ ἡ γυνωμῆν παρὰ τὴν λόγον πάντων ἀνθρώπων τῶν, &c. Athan. c. Arr. Orat. 3. p. 385. Heb. 2. 11.

5. We are taught that our Lord hath by his saving Performances acquired a rightful Propriety in, and a Title of Dominion over all Men living; to him is committed the Governance and Protection of all Mankind, as the reward of what he did and suffered for its sake. He is called *the Lord of all Men; and the head of every Man*. It is said that *all things by his Father are given into his hand, and put under his feet*; that *power is given him over all flesh*; that *All Authority is given him in heaven and earth*; all Judgment is committed to him. Which Priviledges, Rights, Dignities are declared to have been procured by the Virtue of his saving Performances, and purchased by the Price of his Blood. For, To this end, saith St. Paul, *Christ both died and rose again, and revived, that he might be the Lord both of the dead and living*; (or might exercise Lordship over both the dead and the living, *ἡ καὶ νεκρῶν καὶ ζώντων κυριότητα*) and, *We are not our own* (saith He again) *we are bought with a price*: And, we see Jesus, for the suffering of death, crown'd with glory and honour, that by the grace of God he might taste death for every man (or, for the suffering of Death; that by God's Grace he might taste Death for every Man, crowned with Glory and Honour; for there seems to be such a trajection in the Words;) And he was obedient unto death, even to the death of the Cross there-

Matt. 5. 44. Gal. 6. 10. Acts 10. 38.

Ἀνθρώπων αὐτὸν ποιήσας ὁ πατὴρ ἐκ ἀπλῶς ἐποίησεν ἄνθρωπον, ἀλλ' εἰς τὸ κυριεύσαι πάντων αὐτὸν, καὶ ἀγιάζειν πάντας διὰ τῆς χειρὸς αὐτοῦ πεποιήκεν. Ath. Orat. 3. in Art. 385.

Apoc. 17. 14. Acts 10. 36. 1 Cor. 11. 3. Matt. 28. 18. Matt. 11. 27. John 3. 35. 13. 3. Heb. 2. 8. 1. 2. John 17. 2. 5. 22. Phil. 2. 9. Psal. 110. 7.

Rom. 14. 9. 1 Cor. 6. 20. Heb. 2. 9.

Phil. 2. 8, 9. Apoc. 5. 9, 12.

therefore hath God exalted him, and given him a name above every name. Subjection then and Redemption, as they have one ground, so they are implied to have the same extent; as every one must call *Christ Lord*, so he may call him *Saviour*; therefore his *Lord*, because his *Saviour*. And since *Christ* hath got an Authority over all Men, a Propriety in every Man; since he hath undertaken to govern and protect the World, he questionless as a Prince of incomparable Bignity and Clemency, doth verily intend and desire the best Welfare of all his People; it surely cannot be a final Benefit to the Community of Men, that they are his Subjects; the Objects of his Princely Care, and of his Mercy.

Clem. Strom.
7. p. 505.

κἀνδεταὶ ὅτι συμπάντων, ὅπερ καὶ καὶ δέσιναι καὶ καὶ ὅτι πάντων ἡγομένη γὰρ ἐστίν, ἐκείνῳ ὅτι, ὅτι δ' ἐ. He taketh care of all which doth become him that is Lord of all; for that he is indifferently the Saviour of all, saith Clem. Alexand.

1 Tim. 2. 1, 4.

6. We are commanded to pray, intercede, and give thanks (indifferently) for all Men, even for Heathens and Persecutors; as for the Objects of God's benevolent Affection; whom he would have to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of his truth; expressing our Charity in

Μιμῶν τὸ θεῶν — ἐπὶ πάντας θεῶν σω-
θῆναι, ἐκείνους ὡς πᾶν δὲ ἐν χεῖρ, ἐπὶ πάντας αὐτοὺς ἐθελοσὶ σωθῆναι, θεῶν καὶ οὐ ἐπὶ δὲ θεῶν, ἐν χεῖρ. Chrysost.

Quam legem supplicationis ita omnium sacerdotum, & omnium fidelium devotio, concorditer tenet, ut nulla pars mundi sit, in qua hujusmodi orationes non celebrentur à populis Christianis. Supplicat ergò ubique Ecclesia Dei non solum pro Sanctis & in Christo jam regeneratis, sed etiam pro omnibus infidelibus, & inimicis crucis Christi, &c.

Remota ergò discretione, quam divina scientia intra secretum justitiae suae continet, sincerissime credendum atque profutendum est Deum velle, ut omnes homines salvi fiant; siquidem Apostolus, cujus ista sententia est, sollicitissime præcipit quod in omnibus Ecclesiis piissime custoditur, ut Deo pro omnibus hominibus supplicetur. Prof. ad obj. Vincent. 2.

Conformity to the unconfined Goodness of God. Very good Reason (argues St. Chrysostome) there is why we should pray for all Men; for if God doth will the Salvation of all Men, we in imitation of him, should will the same; and if we desire it, we should pray for it. Upon which Score the Catholic Church hath constantly and carefully observed this Precept; so the learned Writer *de vocatione Gentium* assures us: Which law of supplication, saith he, the devotion of all priests, and all the faithful people doth so observe, that there is no part of the World, in which such prayers are not solemnized by the Christian People. The Church of God doth therefore supplicate, not only for the Saints, and the regenerate in Christ, but also for all infidels, and enemies of the Cross of Christ; for all Idolaters, all Persecutors, all Jews, Hereticks and Schismatics. And Prosper himself: Setting aside, saith he, that distinction, which the divine knowledge contains within the secret of his Justice, it is most sincerely to be believed and professed, that God wills that all men shall be saved; since the Apostle, whose sentence that is, doth most solicitously injoin that which is in all the Churches most piously observed, that God should be implored for all men. So

doth he attest the common Practice, and declare the Ground thereof.

7. For which Practice, and for the Confirmation of its Ground (God's serious willingness and desire that Men should be saved) we have the Pattern of our Lord himself praying to his Father for the Pardon of the worst of Men, his Murders; which as it demonstrated his Charity toward them, so it argues that he was their Saviour, for that otherwise he knew they could not be in any Capacity of having Pardon. His praying for them implies the possibility of their receiving Forgiveness; and such a possibility doth presuppose a Disposition in God to grant it, and consequently a Satisfaction provided, such as God requires and accepts, and which shall avail to their Benefit, if toward the Application thereof they perform their Parts.

8. Indeed it is not easy to conceive, how we can heartily pray for Pardon, or for any other Blessing, either for our selves or for others, without supposing Christ to be our Saviour and theirs; without supposing God placable and well affected toward us and them in Christ, upon the account of his Performances and Sufferings in our and their Behalf. We are to offer up all our Devotions in the Name of Christ, and for his Sake must implore all Mercies and Blessings from God, which how can we do seriously and with Faith, if we may reasonably question whether Christ's Merits do respect us, and consequently whether they can be available in our Behalf? I will, saith St. Paul, that Men should pray in every Place, lifting up pure Hands without Wrath or doubting; which Precept how can any Man observe; how can any Man pray with Calmness and Confidence of Mind, who is not assured that Christ is his Saviour, or that God for Christ's sake is disposed to grant his Requests? But this Point we may be obliged to prosecute somewhat farther in the Application.

1 Tim. 2. 3.

9. Either our Saviour's Performances do respect all Men, or some Men (the far greatest Part of Men) do stand upon no other Terms, than those of the first Creation, or rather of the subsequent Captive and Condemnation; being subject to an extremely rigorous Law, and an infallibly certain Guilt; and consequently to inevitable Punishment; being utterly excluded from all Capacity of Mercy, and having no Place of Repentance left unto them (the Place of Repentance being a most signal Part of *Christ's* Purchase) so that if any such Man should, according to the Proportion of his Light and Ability, perform what is agreeable to God's Law, doing what is possible to him (this may be supposed, for what is possible to a Man he may do, what is possible is possible) in order to his Salvation, he notwithstanding should be incapable of any Mercy, Favour or Acceptance. But, beside that it is expressly said, that God did shut up all Men under sin, that he might have mercy upon all; and that we are plainly enough informed, that our Lord did reverse the first fatal Sentence, and hath as the Mediatour between God and Man evacuated all former Covenants by establishing a new one (for if any former Covenant had been good, there had been no place sought for a new one, as the Apostle to the Hebrews discourseth) besides these Considerations, I say, and beside that such Suppositions do not well suit to the Nature of God, and do not well consist with the Tenour of his Providence; God positively and vehemently disclaimeth this Rigour of proceeding; He both under Law and Gospel declares himself ready to admit any Man's Repentance; yea earnestly invites all Men thereto; yea grievously explains and expostulates with Men for not repenting, yea not only says it, but swears it by his own Life, that he desires any wicked Man should do it; He strongly asserts, he earnestly inculcates, he loudly proclaims to all his readiness to pardon, and his delight in shewing mercy; the riches of his goodness, and forbearance, and long-suffering. He declares, that he will exact an Account of Men, according to Proportion, answerable to their willingness to do what they could; and to the Improvements of those Talents (those Measures of Light and Strength) which they had, or might have had; that whoever is faithful in using the smallest Power, shall be accepted and rewarded. He represents himself impartial in his Judgment, and acceptance of Men's Persons and Performances; any Man, in any Nation, his sincere, though imperfect, Piety and Righteousness being acceptable to him; The final Ruin of Men is not imputed to any antecedent Defect lying in Man's State, or God's Will, to no Obstacle on God's Part, nor Incapacity on the Part of Man, but wholly to Man's blameable Neglect, or wilful Abuse of the Means conducive to his Salvation: No want of Mercy in God, or Virtue in the Passion of our Lord are to be mentioned or thought of; Infidelity (formal or interpretative) and obstinate Impenitency, disappointing God's merciful Intentions, and frustrating our Lord's saving Performances, and Endeavours, are the sole Banes of Mankind; *Here saith our Lord) is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil. And, I speak these things, that ye might be saved; but ye will not come to me, that ye might have life. And, How often have I willed to gather thy children, as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings, but ye would not?* Of the Pharisees and Lawyers our Saviour said, *That they defeated the counsel of God toward themselves* (*ἠνέκτισαν τὴν βουλὴν τοῦ εἰς εὐαγγέλιον*) the Counsel of God, who designed to bring them to Repentance by the Instruction and Exhortation of St. John the Baptist. Our Saviour invited many to the Participation of the Gospel (that great Feast of fat things to all people, as the Prophet *Esay* calleth it) but they would not come, saith the Text; he iterated his Message, but they carelessly neglecting it (*ἀμελήσαντες*) went away, one to his farm, another to his merchandize, and the rest took his Servants, and intreated them spitefully, and slew them. The Sower (our Lord) did sow in the field (the world) the good Seed of heavenly Truth, but some would not admit it into their Heads or Hearts; from others Temptation bare it away; in others worldly Cares and Desires choaked it; Our Lord spake the most convincing Words, such as no Man ever spake, such as drew Publicans and Harlots into the Kingdom of Heaven; He performed most astonishing Works, such as never the like were done, which were sufficient to convert Tyre and Sydon, yea to have preserved Sodom, but without Effect; such were the invincible Obstinacy, the gross Stupidity, the corrupt Prejudices, and perverse Affections of his Auditors and Spectators, upon which Cause our Lord chargeth the Inefficacy and

Unsuccessfulness of his Endeavours for their Salvation. So doth St. Stephen call the Jews, unto whom the Gospel was offered, *hard-necked, uncircumcised in heart and ears*; such as *did always resist the holy Spirit.* St. Paul gives the same Character of them, and assigns the same Cause of their rejecting the Gospel. And of the Jews of Antioch 'tis said, that they did *thrust away the word of Salvation, judging themselves unworthy of everlasting life* (that is, disdaining to embrace the Overture of everlasting Life made unto them.) And, *despise thou the riches of God's goodness, and forbearance, and long-suffering, being ignorant that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?* So St. Paul expostulates with the incredulous Jew. And, *How, saith the Apostle to the Hebrews, shall we escape, if we neglect so great Salvation?* So do our Lord and his Apostles state the Reason of Mens misfearing in this great Affair; signifying all requisite Care and Provision to be made on God's Part for their Salvation; and imputing the Obstruction solely to their voluntary Default of Compliance with God in his Conduct and Management thereof.

Neither are the Dealings and Declarations of God toward those who lived under the Law and Prophets, impertinent to this Purpose; they are applicable upon Consideration of Parity in Reason, or Likeness in Case.

What Remonstrances concerning the gentleness, kindness, and equity of his Dealings, what Exprobrations of their stubbornness and stupidity God did anciently make to Israel under that particular Dispensation (which yet in tendency and in representation may be deemed general) the same he might now use toward all Mankind, under this *universal OEconomy*, wherein God hath given to his Son, the heathen for his inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for his possession; whereby all the Kingdoms of the World are become the Kingdoms of the Lord, and his Christ; which hath erected an unconfined Kingdom of Grace; to which all Men in Design and of Right are subject; in respect to which every Nation is in Obligation and Duty become the People of God. What (said God to them) *could I have done more to my Vineyard than I have done, wherefore when I looked for grapes did it bring forth wild grapes!* O Israel, *thou hast destroyed thyself, but in me is thy help. I have spread out my hands all the day-long to a rebellious and gainsaying People. I spake unto you rising up early and speaking, but ye heard not; I called, but ye answered not; I have called, and ye have refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded. But ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof. When I called, ye did not answer; when I spake, ye did not hear; but did evil before mine eyes, and did chuse that, wherein I delighted not.* And, Behold their ear is uncircumcised, and they cannot hearken; behold the word of the Lord is unto them a reproach, they have no delight in it. They refused to hearken, and pulled away the shoulder, and stopped their ears, that they should not hear; yea they made their hearts as an adamant stone, lest they should hear the Law, which the Lord of hosts hath sent in his Spirit. Which Passages, in many others of the like Importance that occur, do imply the large extent of God's merciful Intentions; and the competency of the Means, which God affords for the Salvation of Men; that he wants no Affection or Inclination to save them, that he neglects no means proper for effecting it; that he draws them into the way leading thither, by serious and earnest Invitation, directs them by needful Light and Instruction, excites them by powerful Arguments and Persuasions; and as St. Ambrose speaketh, *Quod in Deo fuit, ostendit omnibus, quod omnes voluit liberare: God shewed to all, that what was in him, he did will to deliver (or save) all men.* Whence he may truly and properly be called the Benefactor and Saviour,

— ἀπολογεῖσθαι μετὰ ἡμετέρας ὅτι πάντα τὰ εἰς αὐτὸν ἵκοντα ἐπὶ σωτηρίᾳ τῶν κερτομένων πεποιήκει — (Bal. in Pl. 7.)

even of those, who by their wilful Malice or Neglect do not obtain Salvation. For in respect to the same Favours, which are exhibited and tendered to them, He is the Saviour of those, who by hearkning to God's Call, and complying with God's Design; by well using the Means vouchsafed, and

performing the Conditions required, do finally attain Salvation.

If it be said, that these Transactions do refer only to God's own People, or to those only, unto whom God pleased to dispense especial Revelations of Truth, and Overtures of Mercy; that we therefore cannot thence infer any thing concerning the general Extent of God's Design, or the Vertue of Christ's Performances in respect to all Mankind; we may to this Suggestion rejoyn, that by observing the manner of God's Proceedings toward them, unto whom he openly declareth his

Mind

Mind and Will, we may reasonably collect how he standeth affected toward others, and by what Rules, or upon what Accompts he dealeth with them; taking in the analogy of Reason, and parity or disparity of the Case. As to God's Affection, it is the same every-where, agreeable to that nature, which inclineth him to be good to all, and merciful over all his creatures (as the Psalmist tells us) unto which disposition his Providence yields a testimony: for *ἐν ἀμείβετον ἀφῆκεν ἑαυτὸν ἀγαθοποιῶν*, he did not leave himself without testimony, doing good to all, as St. Paul tells us; al- though he doth not dispense his Favours in the same Method, or discover his Meaning by the same Light, or call Men to him with the same Voice and Language.

Neither was Mankind ever left destitute of that divine Grace, which (as the good Writer *de vocatione Gentium* saith) never denied it self to any Ages, with the same vertue, in different measure, with an unchangeable Counsel, and multiform Operation. So in one Place; and in another, There was always (saith he) dispensed to all Men a certain measure of Instruction from above, which although it came from a more occult and sparing Grace, did yet suffice to some for remedy, to all for testimony.

Comparing the different States of Men, we may substitute with St. Paul, for the law of revelation engraved upon tables, the law of nature written in Mens hearts; for propheticall instructions the dictates of reason; for audible Admonitions and Reproofs, secret whispers of Grace, and checks of Conscience; for extraordinary instances of Divine Power, the ordinary Works of the Creation (by which God's eternal Divinity and Power are discernible) for the special and occasional Influences of Providence, the common and continual Expressions of divine Beneficence; then allowing for the Disparity (as to measure of evidence and efficacy) in these things; and as to the rest, the case is the same. If one Part hath means more clear and forcible, yet those which are granted to the other are not void of Use or Vertue; by them all Men in all Places may seek God, if haply they may feel him and find him; ye may (as St. Paul implieth) be able to know God, and induced to serve him; to thank him, and to glorify him in some measure; in a measure answerable to such Light and Strength; no more doth God require, for no more will he reckon with them. If their Helps be deemed more low and scanty, their Duty in proportion is less high, and their Accompts will be more easy. Enough certainly they have to excuse God from mis- prison of not having provided competently for them, to render them, if they do not well use and improve it, inexcusable; and what they have is an effect of God's Mercy procured and purchased by their Saviour. But of this Point we may have Occasion afterward to say more; I shall now only add; that this suggestion, well considered, may afford another Argument to confirm our Doctrine; which is this.

10. If our Lord be the Saviour of all those to whom God's Truth is declared, and his Mercy offered; or, if he be the Saviour of all the Members of the visible Church; particularly if he be the Saviour of those, who among these, rejecting the Overtures and Means of Grace, or by Disobedience abusing them, shall in the event fail of being saved, then is he the Saviour of all Men. But Our Lord is the Saviour of those Persons; and therefore he is the Saviour of all Men. The Assump- tion we assayed to shew in the last Argument; and many expresse Testimonies of Scripture before-mentioned establish it; the common Stile of Scripture doth imply it, when in the Apostolical Writings to all the visibly Faithful indifferently the Relation to Christ as their Saviour is assigned, an interest in all his saving Per- formances is supposed, the Title of *σωζόμενοι* and *σωσόμενοι* (with others equiva- lent, of justified, sanctified, regenerated, quickened, &c.) are attributed. And in our Text God is said to be the Saviour chiefly *τῶν πιστῶν*, of the faithful; which Word in its common acceptation denotes all visible Members of the Christian Communion. And for its Confirmation we adjoin: The Apostles at first, and the Church ever since after them (except some heterodox People of late) have professed readily to confer holy Baptism, and therein to dispense Remission of Sins, together with other Evangelical Graces and Privileges, to every Man professing his Faith in Christ, and Resolution to observe Christ's Law, upon this Supposition, that Christ

Gratia Dei nullis seculis se negavit, virtute una, quantitate diversa, concilio incommutabili, opere multiformi. II. 5.

Adebita est semper universis homini- bus quaedam superna mensura doctrinae, quae etsi occultioris pariorisque gratiae fuit, sufficit tamen quibusdam ad reme- dium, omnibus ad testimonium. II. 15.

Rom. 2. 14, 15.

—nulli nationi hominum bonitatis suae dona subtraxit, ut propheticas voces & praecepta legalia convincerentur in elementorum obsequiis, & testimonii accepisse. De Voc. G. I. 5. Rom. 1. 19.

Acts 14. 17.

Acts 17. 27.

Rom. 1. 18,

20.

Rom. 2. 15,

26.

Rom. 1. 21.

Rom. 1. 20.

Heb. 10. 39.
2 Pet. 1. 9.

Anno 855.

Item firmissi-
me tenendum
credimus, &c.
supra.

is the Saviour of all such Persons, and by his salutary Passion hath purchased that Remission for them, although the Dispensers of these Graces could not discern what Decrees God in his secret Providence had passed upon them, or what the event should be as to their final State; yea although according to the Judgment of Providence they could not but conceive, that all such should not be saved, but that many of them should be of those, who (as the Apostle to the Hebrews speaketh) *would draw back unto perdition*, who (as St. Peter implies some might and would do) would forget the Purgation, which they had received of their Sins. That in thus doing the Church proceeds upon a Persuasion that *Christ* is truly the Saviour of all its visible Members, duly admitted and incorporated thereinto, the thing it self plainly signifies; the tenour of its Practice makes palpable, the Forms of Speech used in its holy Administrations (of Prayers, of Sacraments, of Exhortations) do suppose, or express. For how can each Member singly be asserted in Holy Baptism to be washed from his Sins, and sanctified to God, and made regenerate or adopted into the Number of God's Children, and made partaker of *Christ's* Death? How can Thanksgiving in the common Name, in most general Terms, be offered up for *Christ's* saving Performances? Or the Holy Bread and Cup be imparted to each Communicant as Symbols and Pledges of *Christ's* Charity and Mercy towards him? How can every Christian be instigated to Obedience in gratitude to *Christ*, and those who transgress *Christ's* Laws, upbraided for their Ingratitude toward him; their rejecting, or renouncing, despising, or abusing him and his Salvation? How can such things be said and done with any Truth or Consistency; yea without Forgery and Mockery, if every baptized Christian hath not an Interest in our Lord's Performances; if *Christ* be the Saviour only of an uncertain and unknown Part in the Church? This Consideration of the Churches Practice hath made even the most vehement Assertours of St. *Austin's* Doctrine (strained to the highest Pitch) in the more ancient and modest Times, fully to acknowledge this Position; that *Christ* is the Redeemer of every Member of the visible Church, as appears by this remarkable Decree of the Council of *Valentia* in *France*, (consisting of the Bishops of three Provinces, Favourers of *Godscalus* his Opinions.) *We also do believe it most firmly to be held, that all the Multitude of the Faithful, being regenerated by water and the Holy Spirit, and hereby truly incorporated into the Church, and according to the Apostolical Doctrine baptized into the Death of Christ, is by his blood washed from their sins.* Because there could be no true Regeneration, unless there were made also a true Redemption; since in the Sacraments of the Church there is nothing empty (or vain) nothing ludificatory; but all thoroughly true, and supported by its own very truth and sincerity. Yet that out of the very Company of Believers and the Redeemed, some are eternally saved, because by God's Grace they faithfully abide in their Redemption, bearing the Lord's Speech in their Hearts, *He that perseveres to the end shall be saved*; and that others, because they would not abide in the Salvation of the Faith, which they at first received, and did rather chuse to frustrate the Grace of Redemption by evil Doctrine or Life, than to keep it, do no-wise arrive to the Plenitude of Salvation, and to the Perception of eternal Beatitude. 'Tis then a Catholick and True Doctrine, that at least *Christ* is a Saviour of all appearing Christians; and supposing the Truth thereof, I say that by consequence he is also the Saviour of all Men. For it appeareth thence, that the Design of our Saviour's Performances did not flow from, or was not grounded upon any special Love, or any absolute Decree concerning those Persons who in event shall be saved; since according to that Proposition it extendeth to many others; wherefore it proceeded from God's natural Goodness, and common kind Affection toward Mankind; from the Compassion of a gracious Creatour toward his miserable Creature, whence all Men are concerned and interested therein. Why God's merciful Intentions were not explicitly declared and propounded to *Socrates* and *Epicletus*, as they were to *Judas Iscariot* and *Simon Magnus*, is another Question, which we may afterward in some manner assail; at present, it suffices to say, that the Overture of Mercy made to such Wretches doth argue God's kind Disposition and good Intention toward all Men; so it did in St. *Ambrose* his Opinion; who says, That our Lord ought

Et ideo nec proditum debuit prae-
tere, ut adverterent omnes, quod in
electione etiam proditoris sui servando-
rum omnium insigne praevidit. Ambr.
de parad. 8.

not to pass by the Man who should betray him, that all Men might take Notice, that in the Choice even of his Traytour, he did hold forth a Pledge or Mark of all Mens being to be saved.

But

But the Truth of this Doctrine will farther appear by the Declaration and Surveyal of those respects according to which *Christ* is represented the Saviour of Men, as also by considering how useful and conducible to Piety this Doctrine is, as ministring Grounds and Obligations, Encouragements and Motives to the Practice of most considerable Duties required from all Men. But these things must be reserved to another Occasion.

SERMON XL.

The Doctrine of Universal Redemption asserted and explained.

I TIM. IV. 10.

-----The living God ; who is the Saviour of all men, especially of those that believe.

THAT our Lord *Jesus* is the Saviour of all Men, we have before from plain Testimonies of Holy Scripture, and from some Arguments grounded there, assayed to shew. The same will be made farther apparent by considering the Respects according to which he is such ; and those we may first consider generally and in the gross, then survey them more particularly and distinctly.

In general we may say, that our Lord is the Saviour of all Men, for that he hath rendred all Men *salvabiles*, capable of Salvation ; and *salvandos*, designed to Salvation. For that he hath removed all obstacles peremptorily debarring Men from access to Salvation, and hath procured competent furtherances to their attainment of it. For that he hath rescued Mankind out of that dead and desperate Condition, wherein it lay involved ; being *the bread of God*, who hath descended John 6. 33 from heaven, that he might give life to the world, as he saith of himself. For that he hath performed whatever on his Part is necessary or fit in order to Salvation, antecedently to the acceptance and compliance with those reasonable Conditions, which by God's Wisdom are required toward the instating Men into a full and immediate right to Salvation, or to a complete and actual Fruition thereof. He made the Way to Happiness plain and passable : Levelling the insuperable Cliffs, Luke 3. 5 and filling up the Chasms, and rectifying the Obliquities, and smoothing the Asperities thereof, as the Prophet foretold ; so that all Men, who would, might conveniently walk therein. He set the Doors of *Paradise* wide open, so that who pleased might enter in ; all the Bonds and Restraints under which Men lay, he so far loosed, that any Man might be free, who would concur to his own Liberty and Enlargement. All the Protection and Encouragement which was needful toward obtaining Salvation, he afforded and exhibited to every one, that would embrace and make use of them. In respect to which Performances he might be justly esteemed and truly called a *Saviour*, although all Men do not in effect become saved. For the Estimation and Denomination of Performances are to be grounded upon their own Nature and Design, not upon Events depending upon the contingent and arbitrary Behaviour of Men. As he that freely offers a rich Boon is no less to be accounted a Benefactor and Liberal, altho' his Gift be refused,

Η γὰρ ἀπὲρ καταλαβὼς ἐνδόχμηται, ὁ παρὰ δέους ἡνολγν, &c. Athan. in pass.
Luke 4. 18. Ἀιχμάλωτοῖς ἀνέσιν

refused, than if it were accepted ; as he that opens the Prison is to be stiled a Deliverer, although the Captive will not go forth ; as he that ministers an effectual Remedy, although the Patient will not use it, deserves the Honour and Thanks due to a Physician ; so is our Lord in regard to what he hath performed for Men, and offered to them (being sufficient to prevent their Misery, and promote their Happiness) to be worthily deemed, and thankfully acknowledged their Saviour, although not all Men, yea although not one Man should receive the designed Benefit. Accordingly we may observe, that in the Scripture-stile, those Persons are said to be saved, who are only in a way toward Salvation, although they do not arrive thither ; and the Means conducing to Salvation are said to save, although their Effect may be defeated ; σωζόμενοι and σεσωσμένοι are Terms applied to all Christians, and Christ is ὁ σῶν, he that hath saved them ; and Faith is said to have saved them, although some of them εἰς ἄν ᾤκτισαν, have believed in vain, or to no effect, forsaking and renouncing their Faith ; and Baptism saves them who partake it, although being washed, they return to their wallowing in the Mire. And as our Lord is so termed a Saviour in respect to them, who are by Faith and Admission into the Church, put into a more near Capacity of Salvation, as St. Paul speaketh : ἐγγύτερον ἡμῶν ἢ ὅταν ἐπιστεύσαμεν (Now is our Salvation nearer than when we believed ;) so is he in respect of all those, who are in any Capacity thereof, although a more remote one.

But let us now view more nearly and distinctly the Respects in which he is a Saviour of all Men, or the particular Benefits and Advantages conducing to Salvation, which by his Performances accrue to Mankind ; for πάλπολυ τὴν σωτηρίαν ἀπαύση χαρίζεται τῇ ἀνθρωπότητι, In very many ways he bestoweth Salvation upon all mankind, as Clemens Alexandrinus speaks.

1. Our Lord is the Saviour of all Men, as having effected that Almighty God (who upon great Provocations was justly displeased and angry with Man, who had averted his Face, and withdrawn his Favour from Mankind, whom our Apostasy and Rebellion had rendred a Stranger and an Enemy to us) hath depofed his Wrath toward Mankind, hath conceived a kind Affection to it, doth cast a favourable Aspect upon it ; being thoroughly reconciled and made a Friend there-to by our Saviour's Mediation. This is my beloved Son, ἐν ᾧ εὐδόκησα, in whom I have been well pleased, was the Attestation given from God to our Lord ; the meaning whereof in regard to Men, the holy Choir of Angels did interpret, when after the gladfome Report of his Birth (that great joy, which should be to all people) they sang, Glory be to God on high, on Earth Peace, Good-will toward Men. Which St. Paul farther declareth, when he saith, That by him εὐδόκησε, God pleased to reconcile unto himself all Things, upon Earth, and in Heaven ; and when he saith, That God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their sins. And, When we were enemies (saith he again) we were reconciled to God by the death of his son : When we were enemies, that implies God antecedently to any Man's Conversion to have been appeased, and become favourably disposed toward all Men, or toward those whom St. Paul speaketh unto, as Men ; so the reason of the Case doth import, and so the Analogy which St. Paul immediately after propounds between the Results of Adam's Transgression and our Saviour's Obedience (as to Provocation and Reconciliation, to Condemnation and Absolution, to the intents of bringing Death and Life upon all Men) doth enforce. Whence it is, that God declareth himself now to bear an universal good-will to Mankind, that he doth earnestly desire the Welfare of all Men, and is displeased with the Ruin of any Man ; that he would have all Men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth, because there is one Mediatour between God and Man ; that he would not have any perish, but that all should come to repentance ; this he affirms, yea (for the Confirmation of our Faith and our Consolation therein) he in the Evangelical Prophet swears it, As I live, saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live. So far toward our Salvation is done, God meets us half way ; he is reconciled unto us, it remains only that we be reconciled to him ; that we hearken to the Embassy from him : Be reconciled to God.

2. Jesus is the Saviour of all Men, by satisfying the divine Justice, and repairing God's Honour in their Behalf. The disloyal and ingrateful Behaviour of Man had so wrong'd, so endamaged, so dishonour'd God (had so abused the Goodness,

nels, disparaged the Wisdom, slighted the Power, impeached and slur'd the Authority of his Creator, had so prejudiced all the Rights and Interests of God) that by the divine Wisdom it was thought fit, that he should not be restored into a Capacity of Mercy and Favour, without a signal Compensation made, and an exemplary Punishment undergone, whereby the Right of God should conspicuously be asserted, his love of Goodness and dislike of Wickedness should be remarkably demonstrated, and every Creature in Heaven and Earth should be solemnly admonished of its Duty; of the Reverence and Obedience it owes to the great Creator, of the heinous Guilt and horrible Mischief it incurs by offending him. Such a Compensation Man was no wise able to make, or fit to undergo such a Punishment: Our Saviour therefore, out of infinite Pity and Charity, did undertake both; by a voluntary Condescension putting himself into the low and weak State of Man; subjecting himself unto that Law which Man was obliged unto, and suffering the Pains which Man had deserved. This he was pleased to do in Man's Behalf, and in our stead; and God was pleased to accept it as so done. His Incarnation (or Exinanition of himself, as St. Paul calleth it) was an Act of that high Duty and Goodness, that it in Virtue surpassed all the Obedience, which all Creatures were able to render; that it yielded God more Satisfaction and more Honour than the joint Endeavours of all the World could confer. His with so intense Charity and Cheerfulness fulfilling all Righteousness did far more please God, than all our most exact Obedience could have done; his enduring bitter Pains and Disgraces (considering the infinite Dignity of his Person, his near Relation and Dearness to God, his perfect Innocence and Rectitude, yea his immense Charity, Contentedness and Patience) more than countervailed the Punishment due to the Sins of all Men. Such a Payment was more than served to discharge all our Debts (it serv'd to purchase an *Overplus* of Graces and Blessings) so rich a Price was more than sufficient to ransom all the World from Captivity; so goodly, so pure, so sweet, so precious a Sacrifice might worthily expiate and atone all the Guilts of Men.

Now if we enquire what our Saviour did redeem, the Consideration of what he paid, may (as St. *Austin* tells) help to inform us; *Quaritis quid emerit? videte quid dederit, & invenite quid emerit.* Do ye see (saith he) what he bought? See what he gave, and find what he bought. However, that as the Value and Sufficiency of our Lord's Performances, so the Design and Effect thereof did reach so far in regard to Man; that his Charity was no less extensive than his Performance was complete, for our good, the holy Scripture teaches us. For, *He is the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world* (saith the Baptist.) And, *The bread (saith he) which I gave is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.* And, *He is a propitiation (saith St. John) for our sins; and not only for our sins, but for the sins of the whole world.* And, *He is the Mediator of God and Man, who gave himself ἀντίδοτον ὑπὲρ πάντων, a ransom, in the stead, and for all Men* (saith St. Paul.) And, *He tasted death for every one* (saith the Author to the Hebrews.) And, *He was that one Man, who, as it was expedient, did dye for the whole Nation of Men.* And, *God was in him reconciling the world to himself, not imputing their sins.* And, *He came into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world might by him be saved (or freed from Condemnation.)* And, *As by the offence of one man judgment came upon all men to condemnation, so by the righteousness of one mercy came upon all to justification of life.* The end we see of our Saviour's Performances was, that he might wipe off the Guilt of Sin from all Mankind, that he might reverse the Condemnation passed thereupon, and that he might remove the Punishment due thereto; or, that absolving the first Man's Sin, he might take it away from the whole Race (as St. *Athanasius* speaks.)

All Men have sinned, and come short (or are destitute) of the glory of God, being justified freely by his grace, by the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the Law, being made a curse for us. He was born under the Law, that he might redeem those which were under the Law. He that knew no sin, was made sin (was punished and dealt with as a Sinner) that we might

Λοιπὸν ὅ οἱ ἄνθρωποι ἐκίτι μὴ τὰ ἴδια πάσῃ μῆσιν, ἀμαρτωλοὶ καὶ νεκροὶ ἀλλὰ καὶ τὴν τῆς λόγου δύναμιν ἀναστήτες ἀθάνατοι καὶ ἀφάρτοι αἰεὶ διαμύσσω. Athan. in Arian. Orat. 4. 485.

Τότε δὲ ὁ θάνατος, καὶ κατὰ ἐλευθερίαν, καὶ δαίμονες κατεχόνοντο καὶ ἐδείχθησαν τῷ θεῷ δειλαμένοι, καὶ τὸ χειρότερον τῶν ἀμαρτιῶν πρὸς αὐτῷ προσφιλῆος, Ὡς. Chrys. in John 1. 14. Phil. 2. 7.

Ὁ Ἰησοῦς παρσία τῷ σωτήρι θανάτῳ ὑπὲρ πάντων καὶ κρίσεως πάντων σωτηρία γέγονεν. Athan. ad Adelph. Ep.

Vide Cyrill. in Eph. Conc. p. 133. Δικαιώσῃ τὴν ἀνθρώπου φύσιν, Ὡς. Eph. 5. 2. Heb. 10. 10. 9. 12. 1 Pet. 1. 19.

Aug. in Psal. 95. Μὴ θαυμάζῃς εἰ κόσμος ὅλος ἐλυτρώθη· εἰ δὲ ἡ ἀνθρώπου φύσις, ἀλλ' ὅς θεός μονογενής, ὁ ὑψίστος ὁ πάντων. Cyrill. Cat. 13.

John 1. 29. 6. 51.

John 2. 2. 1 Tim. 2. 5.

Heb. 2. 9.

John 11. 50. 18. 14.

3. 17. 2 Cor. 5. 29.

Rom. 5. 17.

Ἰνα ἐκείνη λύαν τὴν ἀμαρτίαν, ἀπὸ πάντων αὐτὴν ἀρῇ τῷ ᾧ. Athan. in pass. Rom. 4. 23.

Gal. 3. 13.

5. 5.

2 Cor. 5. 21.

be made the righteousness of God in him; (that we might be capable of being esteemed and dealt with as righteous by God upon this Account.) So that the Result is, Divine Justice being fully satisfied, and the Honour of God fully repaired (in regard to all Sins past and future) the Mouth of Vengeance being stopped, the Claims of Death and Hell being evacuated, that general Sentence of Condemnation (pass'd upon all the Sons of Adam) is suspended, Death ceases to reign by any just Power, or inevitable Necessity; (it is, as St. Paul saith, abolished or abrogated as to any lawful Right, or necessary Force it hath) the Rigour and Severity of that Law, which upon pain of Death exacteth most punctual Obedience (and which consequently doth expose all Men to unavoidable Condemnation) is tempered and abated, a Foundation is laid for the shewing Mercy, and granting Pardon. In respect whereto,

2 Tim. 1. 10.

Gal. 3. 10. 12.

Rom. 10. 9.

3. Our Lord is the Saviour of all Men, as having in the Behalf of Mankind transacted and ratified a new Covenant, very necessary for, and very conducive to the Salvation of Mankind; whereby Salvation is made attainable, and is really tendred unto all, upon feasible and equal Conditions. According to the Purport whereof upon any Man (however stained or loaded with the Guilt of most heinous Transgressions) his embracing the Overtures thereof, consenting to, and complying with the Terms propounded therein, that is, sincerely believing, and seriously repenting; returning to God with hearty Desires and earnest Resolutions to serve him; God is ready to dispense Mercy and Pardon, and immediately receiveth the Person into Grace and Favour with him; yea, the Man continuing to perform a faithful (though imperfect) Obedience, an Obedience suitable to Man's natural Infirmary and Frailty, and proportionable to the Assistances afforded him; God farther promiseth to bestow inestimable Blessings and Rewards of Joy and Happiness. That Covenant which the Prophets implied of old, when (beside,

Isa. 1. 16.

Isa. 55. 7.

Ezek. 18. 21.

Mark 16. 25.

Luke 24. 47.

Acts 5. 31.

Phil. 4. 3.

Θαυμασία.

Euseb.

Ἐν πλείους

ἐκκλησίαις.

Euseb.

Ἀτενίσταμεν εἰς τὸ αἷμα τοῦ Χριστοῦ, ὃ

ἴδωμεν ὡς ἔστι τιμιόν αὐτῷ θεῷ αἷμα αὐτοῦ,

ὅτι διὰ τοῦ ἡμετέρου σωτηρίαν ἐκχυθέν,

παντὶ τῷ κόσμῳ μετανοίας χάριν ἵσχυ-

νεύει. Ἀτενίσταμεν εἰς ἡμέρας πάσας,

ὡς καὶ ἀμαρτωλοὶ ὅτι ἐν ἡμέρᾳ τοῦ Χριστοῦ με-

τανοίας τόπον ἔδωκεν ὁ δεσπότης τοῖς

βυλομένοις ἐπιστρέφειν εἰς αὐτόν. Clem.

ad Corinth.

Covenant which our Lord commanded his Apostles to declare and propound to all Mankind; Go ye (said he to them) into the whole world, and preach the doctrine to every creature; that Gospel, according to which, as it is expressed in St. Luke, repentance and remission ought to be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem; in respect to which, St. Peter says, that God hath exalted our Lord to be a Prince and a Saviour, to grant repentance to Israel, and remission of sins; (to grant repentance, that is, (as the Apostle to the Hebrews and Clemens Romanus speak) μετανοίας τόπον, room for Repentance, or capacity to receive Pardon upon Repentance) concerning which Covenant that Clemens (the Fellow-labourer of St. Paul, and whom Clemens Alexandrinus calleth an Apostle) in that excellent, admirable and almost Canonical Epistle to the Corinthians, which (as Eusebius and Hierome tell us) was anciently publicly read in most Churches, hath these remarkably full and clear Expressions; Let us (saith he) look stedfastly upon the blood of Christ, and let us see how precious to God his blood is, which being shed for our salvation, did bring the grace of repentance to the whole world. Let us attentively regard all ages, and observe that in every generation the Lord granted place of repentance to them who would turn unto him. This is that new and better Covenant, established upon better promises (cancelling all former, exceptionable, imperfect and ineffectual Compacts, referring to Man's Interest and Duty) about which the Apostle to the Hebrews discourseth, and whereof he calleth our Lord the Mediator and Sponsor; in regard to which St. Paul calleth him the Mediator between God and Man; plainly declaring all Men to have a Concernment and Interest therein; for this Supposition he useth as an Argument proving God's universal Desire of Man's Conversion and Salvation: Who would have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God and

one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus. By virtue of which Covenant it is, that any such degrees of Love or Fear toward God (such as Men are capable of) are available, any righteous Performances, such as our Weakness can produce, are acceptable, any honest Endeavours do receive Countenance and Encouragement; and that (as St. Peter observed) *in every Nation he that feareth God, and worketh righteousness, is accepted by him*; although his Fear of God be not so intense, or pure: his Righteousness not so exact and unblameable, as according to extremity of Law and Duty, they should be. From which Covenant so far as is any Man, according to God's intention and desire, from being excluded, that all Men are seriously invited, vehemently exhorted, earnestly intreated to enter into it, and to partake the Benefits exhibited thereby. Every Man that feeleth himself to want those Benefits, and is desirous of Mercy and Ease from the Guilt and Burthen of his Sins, may come and welcome. *Hoe every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters*; So the Evangelical Prophet proclaims; and, *If any man thirsteth, let him come to me and drink*, crieth our Lord; and, *Come to me all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest*. (*Δεῦτε πάντες, Come all to me*). All Men therefore (saith Origen) who from the Nature of Sin do labour and are burthened, are called to that Rest; which is with the Word of God.) And, *in Christ's name* (saith St. Paul) *we are Embassadors, as that God by us intreateth, we pray for Christ be reconciled to God*; the purport of which Embassy, together with its extent, he elsewhere thus expresth, *πανῶν παρ' ἡμῶν τοῖς ἀνθρώποις πᾶσι πανταχῶς μετανοεῖν, He now proclaimeth to all men every where that they should repent*; he consequently holds forth to all the Benefits annexed to Repentance. But of this we spake formerly.

4. Our Lord Jesus is the Saviour of all men, as having purchased and procured for them competent Aids, whereby they are enabled to perform the Conditions required of them in order to their Salvation; to acquire a sufficient Knowledge of their Duty, to subdue their bad Inclinations and Lusts, to withstand Temptations; or briefly, whereby they are enabled sincerely to repent of their Sins, and acceptably to perform their due Obedience. The Truth of this Point, taking in the Consideration of Man's natural State, may by good Consequence be inferr'd from the Truth of the Points foregoing. If Men are naturally so dead in Trespasses and Sins, so enslaved and sold under Sin; so very prone to evil, and averse to good; so dark and blind that they cannot well discern what they should do, so corrupt and weak that they cannot perform what they know and confesse to be good (as St. Paul affirmeth Men to be) and consequently are of themselves indisposed to perform the Duties acceptable to God, and requisite by his appointment toward their Salvation, then either our Lord hath provided for them a Communication of Grace sufficient to countervail or surmount that natural Impotency, or all his Designs for their Good are imperfect or inconsistent (aiming at an End, without proving requisite Means, or removing necessary Obstructions) and his Performances, whereby the forementioned Benefits were procured, do prove ineffectual and fruitless. For God being appeased, and become well-affected to Man's Salvation, divine Justice being satisfied, the Rigour of Law being mitigated, Repentance being made available, and an Obedience, agreeable to Man's frailty, becoming acceptable, with all other the immediate results of our Saviour's Transactions for Man, would signify nothing in regard to him, who still lieth under a necessity of Sinning, or an inability of performing that which is indispensibly exacted from him toward a complete Enjoyment of those Benefits and Favours. In vain is the Debt paid, and the Bond cancell'd, and the Prison set open, and Liberty proclaimed, and the Prisoner called forth, if he be not himself able to knock off the Fetters which detain him, and there is no help afforded, by which he may do it. But our Lord hath surely laid his Designs more advisedly, and hath prosecuted his Work more perfectly. Wherefore we may suppose that a Competency of Grace and spiritual Assistance is by virtue of our Saviour's Performances really imparted to every Man, qualifying him to do what God requires, and is ready to accept from him in order to his Welfare; that our Saviour hath sent abroad his Holy Spirit (that Fountain of all

Quo dicto ostenditur nullum hominem secundum naturam esse pollutum, sed aequaliter omnes ad Christi Evangelium provocari. Hic ad Aug. Epist. XI.

Aas 10. 34.

Isa. 55. 1.

John 7. 37.

Matt. 11. 28.

Πάντες ἔν οι ἀνθρώποι διὰ τὴν ἁμαρτίαν φθονοῦσι κοπιῶντες καὶ περισπῶμενοι καλεῖναι ἐπὶ τὴν παρὰ τοῦ λόγου τῆ Θεοῦ ἀνάπαυσιν. Orig. in Cels. 3.

2 Cor. 5. 20. Aas. 17. 30.

Eph. 2. 1.

Colos. 2. 13.

Rom. 7. 14,

15.

Eph. 5. 8.

2 Cor. 4. 6.

2 Pet. 1. 19.

Sc.

Ὁ ἐπὶ τὰ αἰ-

σχέδια τοῦ Θεοῦ

αἰτοφύεις ἀδελ-

φίας ἔργον.

Max. Tyr.

Dis. 22.

Si Deus non operatur in nobis, nullius possumus esse participes virtutis; sine hoc quippe bono nihil est bonum, sine hac luce nihil est lucidum, sine hac sapientia nihil sanum, sine hac iustitia nihil rectum. De Voc. Gent. 1. 8.

Τοῖς ἐν βίῳ
ἐπαγγελμένοις
ἰσχυρὴν πρὸς τὴν
λοικῶν σωσθῆναι
ἐλπίαν ἐμπνέει.
Clem. Alex.
Strom. VII.
p. 523.

true Goodness, of all spiritual Light, Strength and Comfort) like the Sun, to shine, to warm, to dispense benign Influences over the World; although it shineth not so brightly and vigorously, and its presence is not so visible and sensible in one Place as another; which Holy Spirit, as it is in its Essence omnipresent, so it is likewise in its Energy incessantly working (in reasonable measure, right manner, and fit season, as wisdom ordereth) upon the Minds and Affections of Men, infusing good Thoughts and Motions, impressing Arguments and Motives to good Practice, cherishing and promoting good Purposes; checking bad Designs, restraining and reclaiming from bad Courses. Our Reason, however aided by exterior Instruction and Excitement, being unable to deal with those mighty Temptations, Oppositions and Discouragements we are to encounter with, he hath given us a wise and powerful Spirit, to guide and ~~and~~ us; to excite and encourage us, to relieve and succour us in all our religious Practice and spiritual Warfare. So that all Deliverance from the Prevalency of Temptation and Sin we owe to his Grace and Assistance. That to these Purposes the Holy Spirit is plentifully conferred upon all the visible Members of the Christian Church we have plainly declared in Scripture; It was a Promise concerning the Evangelical Times, that God would pour forth his Spirit upon all flesh; The Collation thereof is a main Part of the Evangelical Covenant (into a Participation of which every Christian is admitted) it being the Finger of God whereby God's Law is impressed upon their inward Parts, and engraven in their Hearts (as the Prophets describe the effects of this Covenant.) And the End of our Saviour's Passion is by St. Paul declared to be, *that the blessing of Abraham might come unto the Gentiles, through Jesus Christ, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit by faith*; that is, that becoming Christians we might partake thereof. And the Apostolical Ministry (that is, preaching the Gospel, and dispensing the Privileges thereof) is therefore styled, *διακονία πνεύματος*, the ministry of the Spirit. And the *tasting of the heavenly gift, and partaking the Holy Ghost* is (according to the Apostle to the Hebrews) part of the Character of a visible Christian (such a Christian, who might ἀπαρσέν, fall away, as he supposeth, and re-crucify the Lord, and expose him to shame;) and St. Peter makes reception of the Holy Ghost to be a concomitant or consequent of Baptism; Repent, saith he, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost; for the promise (or that promise of the Spirit, which is called, the spirit of promise, peculiar to the Gospel) is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. (That is, the Holy Spirit is promised to all, how far distant soever in Time or Place, who shall be invited unto, and shall embrace Christianity;) and accordingly, St. Paul saith of Christians, that God according to his mercy hath saved us by the laver of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost. And, Know ye not (saith he to the Corinthians) that ye are the temple of God; and that the spirit of God dwelleth in you? (that is, Do ye not understand this to be a common Property and Privilege of Christians, such as ye profess your selves to be?) And the Union of all Christians into one body, doth, according to St. Paul, result from this one Spirit, as a common Soul imparted to them all, inanimating and actuating the whole Body, and every Member thereof. For by one Spirit we are all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Gentiles, whether bond or free, and have been all made to drink of one spirit. And it hath been the Doctrine constantly with general Consent delivered in and by the Catholick Church, that to all Persons, by the holy Mystery of Baptism duly initiated into Christianity, and admitted into the Communion of Christ's Body, the Grace of the Holy Spirit is communicated, enabling them to perform the Conditions of Piety and Vertue which they undertake; and continually watching over them for Accomplishment of those Purposes; which Spirit they are admonished not to resist, to abuse, to grieve, to quench; but to use it well, and improve its Grace to the working out their Salvation. Thus much concerning the Result of our Saviour's Performances, in this kind, in respect to the Community of Christians, we learn from the Holy Scripture and Ecclesiastical Tradition interpreting it; whence we may discern, that the Communications of Grace do not always flow from any special Love or absolute Decree concerning Men, but do commonly proceed from the general Kindness and Mercy of God, by our Lord procured for Mankind; and consequently we may thence collect, that somewhat of this Nature is to the same Purpose, from the same Source, and

and upon the same Account, also granted and dispensed to others. Unto *Christians* indeed this great Benefit (for the Reward, the Encouragement, the Support of their Faith, and for promoting their Obedience, who are in a nearer Capacity and more immediate Tendency to Salvation) is in a more plentiful Measure, and a more conspicuous Manner dispensed; but that besides that Dispensation, there have been other (not so plainly signified, or expressly promised, yet really imparted) Communications of Grace, in virtue of our Saviour's Merits, there are (beside the main Reason alledged, inferring it from our Lord's being the Saviour of all Men) divers good inducements to believe. For even those *Christians* to whom upon their Faith the Holy Spirit is promised and bestowed, are by previous Operations of God's Grace, opening their Minds, inclining their Heart, and tempering their Affections) induced to embrace *Christianity*, Faith it self being a Gift of God, and a Fruit of the Holy Spirit. And before our Saviour's coming all good Men have thereby been instructed and enabled to do well. And before any special Revelation made, or any particular Covenant enacted (before the enclofure of a particular People or Church, the confinement of God's extraordinary Presence and Providence to one Place) divine Grace appears diffused over several Nations, being watchful in guiding and moving Men to good, and withdrawing them from evil; neither is there Reason why such an appropriation of special Graces and Blessings (upon special Reasons) unto some should be conceived to limit or contract God's general Favour, or to withdraw his ordinary Graces from others. God surely (*who is, πλεστον ὡς ἐλέει*, Eph. 2. 4. *rich in mercy*; yea, *ὑπερβαλλοῦσα πλεστον χάριτος*, *excessive riches of grace*,) 2. 7. is not so poor or parsimonious, that being liberal to some should render him sparing toward others; his Grace is not like the Sea, which if it overflow upon one Shore, must therefore retire from another; if it grow deep in one Place, must become shallower in another. *Is the Spirit of the Lord straitned?* It is a Question in * *Micah*; And, *Is my hand shortned at all, that it cannot redeem?* is another Question in *Esay*: No; *The Lord's hand is not shortned that it cannot save, nor his ear heavy, that it cannot hear*; at any time, in any Place; he is no less able, no less ready than he ever was to afford help to his poor Creatures, where-ever it is needful or opportune. As there was of old an *Abimelech* among the *Philistines*, whom God by special warning deterr'd from Commission of Sin; a divine *Melchisedeck* among the *Canaanites*; a discreet and honest *Jethro* in *Madian*; a very religious and vertuous *Job* in *Arabia*; who by complying with God's Grace, did evidence the Communication thereof in several Nations; so it is not unreasonable to suppose the like Cause now, although we cannot by like attestation certify concerning the particular Effects thereof. We may at least discern and shew very conspicuous Footsteps of divine Grace, working in Part, and producing no despicable Fruits of moral Virtue, of Justice and Honesty, Temperance and Sobriety, Benignity and Bounty, Courage and Constancy in worthy Enterprises, Meekness, Patience, Clem. Alex. Modesty; Prudence and Discretion; yea, of Piety and Devotion in some manner, even among *Pagans*, which if we do not allow to have been in all respects so complete, as to instate the Persons endowed with them, or Practicers of them in God's Favour, or to bring them to Salvation; yet those Qualities and Actions (in degree, or in matter at least, so good, and so conformable to God's Law) we can hardly deny to have been the Gifts of God, and the Effects of divine Grace; they at least themselves acknowledged so much; (for, *Nulla sine Deo mens bona est*, *No mind is good without God*, said *Seneca*; and, *Ἐπεὶ μὴ οὐ φαίνεται ὡς ἀγαθὴν οὐκ ἔχουσαν, οὐδὲ ὡς ἀγαθὴν οὐκ ἔχουσαν*, *Virtue appears to proceed from a divine dispensation to them who partake of it*, said *Socrates*) and, *αἱ ἀρεταὶ φύσεις, ἀμφοτεροῦται ἐν μέσῳ τῆς ἀρετῆς ἀρετῆς πρὸς τὴν ἐσχάτην μοχθηρίαν καὶ ἀνομιαν, καὶ πρὸς τὴν ἐξουσίαν τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ τὴν ἐξουσίαν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου*, *The best natured Souls being constituted in the middle between the highest virtue and extreme wickedness, do need God to be their succourer and*

Eph. 2. 8.
Gal. 5. 22.
Luke 24. 45.
Matt. 16. 17.
John 16. 12.
1 Cor. 12. 3.

Ex quo perspicuum fit naturā omnibus inesse Dei notitiam, nec quēquam sine Christo nasci, & non habere semina in se sapientiae, iustitiae, reliquarumque virtutum. Unde multi absque fide, & Evangelio Christi vel sapienter faciunt aliqua vel sancte, &c. Hier. in Galat. 1.

*Secundum Scripturam credimus & piissime confitemur, quod nunquam universitati hominum divina providentiae cura defuerit. Quem licet exceptum sibi populum specialibus ad pietatem direxerit institutis, nulli tamen nationi hominum bonitatis suae dona subtraxit, &c. De Vocat. Gen. 1. 5.
* Mic. 2. 7. Isa. 50. 2. 59. 1.*

Mortalem vitam honestare possunt, aeternam conferre non possunt. Prosper in Collat. cap. 26.

(Prodesse ad salutem. Aug. Prosper, Fulgent. &c.)

Nemo vir magnus sine aliquo afflatu divino unquam fuit. Cic. de Nat. deorum II. sub fin.

Sen. Epist. 73.

Quae secundum iustitiae regulam non solum vituperare non possumus, sed etiam meritis restitue laudamus. Plat. Menon. fine.

Aug. desp. & lit. 27.

— *Dei dona,*
Epist. 130.
Aug.

assistant in the inclining and leading them to the better side ; saith Max. Tyr. XXII. St. Austin himself, who seems the least favourable in his Judgment concerning their Actions and State, who calls their Virtues but Images and Shadows of Virtue (*non veras, sed verisimiles*) splendid Sins ; acknowledges those virtuous Dispositions and Deeds to be the Gifts of God, to be laudable to procure some Reward, to avail so far, that they, because of them, shall receive a more tolerable and mild Treatment from divine Justice ; which Things considered, such Persons do at least by virtue of Grace imparted to them, obtain some Part of Salvation, or an imperfect kind of Salvation, which they owe to our Lord, and in regard whereto he may be called in a sort their Saviour.

Tolerabilius puniuntur. Minus Fabricius quam Catilina punietur, &c.— non veras virtutes habendo, sed à veris virtutibus non plurimum deviando. Aug.

But although the Torrent of natural Pravity hath prevailed so far, as that we cannot assign, or nominate any (among those, who have lived out of the Pale) who certainly or probably have obtained Salvation, yet doth it not follow thence that a sufficient Grace was wanting to them. The most uni-

versal Practice contrary to the Intents of Grace doth not evince a defect of Graces. For we see that the same Cause hath in a manner universally overborn and defeated other Means and Methods designed and dispensed by God for the Instruction and Emendation of Mankind.

Gen. 6. 3.
1 Pet. 3. 20.
Neh. 9. 20.

Isa. 5. 4.
Psal. 14.
Rom. 1. 21.

God's Spirit did long strive with the Inhabitants of the *old World* ; yet no more than one Family was bettered, or saved thereby. God by his good Spirit instructed the *Israelites* in the Wilderness (as *Nebemias* saith) yet no more than two Persons did get into *Canaan* : That People afterward had afforded to them great Advantages of Knowledge and Excitements to Piety ; (so that God intimates, that he could not have done more for them, in that regard than he had done.) Yea, *There is none that understandeth, or seeketh after God*, was a Complaint in the best Times. The *Pagans* had the means of knowing God, as St. Paul affirmeth, yet generally they grew vain in their Imaginations, and their foolish Heart was darkened ; from which like Cases and Examples we may infer, that divine Grace might be really imparted, although no effect correspondent to its main Design were produced. Neither, because we cannot alledge any evident Instances of Persons converted or saved by Virtue of this Grace (this *parcior occultiorque gratia*, more sparing and secret grace, as the good Writer *de Vocatione Gentium* calls it) are we forced to grant there were none such ; but as in *Israel* when *Elias* said, the Children of *Israel* have forsaken God's Covenant, thrown down his Altars, and slain his Prophets with the sword ; And I, I only am left ; there were yet in *Israel*, living closely, seven thousand knees, who had not bowed to *Baal* : So among the Generations of Men, commonly overgrown with Ignorance and Impiety, there might (for all that we can know) be divers Persons indiscernible to common View, who by complying with the Influences of God's Grace, have obtained competently to know God, and to reverence him ; sincerely to love Goodness, and hate Wickedness ; with an honest Heart, to observe the Laws of Reason and Righteousness ; in such a Manner and Degree which God might accept ; so that the Grace afforded might not only *sufficere omnibus in testimonium* (suffice to convince all Men) but *quibusdam in remedium* (to correct and cure some) as that Writer *de Vcc. Gent.* speaks. The Consideration of God's Nature and Providence doth serve farther to persuade the Truth of this Assertion. If God be rich in Mercy and Bounty toward all his Creatures, as such (and such he frequently asserts himself to be) if he be All-present, and All-provident, as he certainly is, how can we conceive him to stand as an unconcerned Spectator of what Men do, in Affairs of this Consequence ? That he should be present beholding Men to run precipitantly into desperate Mischiefs and Miscarriages, without offering to stay or obstruct them ; struggling with their Vices and Follies, without affording them any relief or furtherance ; assaulted by strong Temptations, without yielding any Support or Succour ; panting after Rest and Ease, without vouchsafing some guidance and assistance toward the obtaining them ? How can he see Men invincibly erring and inevitably sinning, without making good what the Psalmist says of him : *Good and upright is the Lord, therefore will he teach sinners in the way* ; to withhold his Grace in such Cases, seemeth inconsistent with the kind and compassionate Nature of God, especially such as now it stands, being reconciled to Mankind, by the

1 Kings 19.
14. 18.

Psal. 145. 9.

Psal. 25. 3.

Medi-

Mediator of God and Men, Christ Jesus. He also, that is so bountiful and indulgent toward all Men in regard to their Bodies and temporal Estate ; *who preserveth their Life from Destruction*, who protecteth them continually from Danger and Mischief ; *who openeth his hand, and satisfieth the desires of every living thing*, who satisfieth the longing Soul, and filleth the hungry Soul with goodnes. Who (as St. Paul speaketh) *filleth mens hearts with food and gladness*, is it likely that he should altogether neglect their spiritual Welfare ; and leave their Souls utterly destitute of all Sustenance or Comfort ; that he should suffer them to lie fatally exposed to eternal Death and Ruin ; without offering any Means of Redress or Recovery ? To conceive of God, seemed very unreasonable even to a Pagan Philosopher : *Do you think (saith Max. Tyrius) that Divination, Poetry, and such like Things, are by divine Inspiration insinuated into Men's Souls, and that Vertue* (so much better, and so much rarer a thing) *is the work of moral Art ? You have forsooth a worthy Conceit of God, who take him to be liberal in bestowing mean things, and sparing of better things. He that (as St. Paul saith) giveth to all Men Life, Breath, and all Things, will he with-hold from any that best of Gifts, and most worthy of him to give, that Grace whereby he may be able to serve him, to praise him, to glorify him, yea, to please and gratify him ; to save a Creature and Subject of his ; the Thing wherein he so much delighteth ? From hence also, that God hath vouchsafed general Testimonies of his Goodness, inducements to seek him, footsteps whereby he may be discovered and known, a Light of Reason and Law of Nature written upon Mens Hearts ; attended with Satisfaction, and Checks of Conscience ; so many Dispositions to Knowledge and Obedience (as St. Paul teacheth us) we may collect that he is not deficient in communicating interiour Assurances, promoting the good Use and Improvement of those Talents ; for that otherwise the bestowing them is frustraneous and useles ; being able to produce no good Effect ; yea, it rather is an Argument of Unkindness, being apt only to produce an ill Effect in those, upon whom it is conferr'd ; an aggravation of Sin, an accumulation of Guilt and Wrath upon them.*

Psal. 103. 4.
145. 16.
107. 9.

Acts 14. 17.

Max. Tyr.
Diff. XXII.

Ἡ ποτὶς ἀξίον νομίζει τὸ θεῖον, πρὸς μὲν τὰ φαῦλα καλῶς ἢ ἀφρονῶς παρασκευασμένη, πρὸς δὲ τὰ κρείττω ἀπορροῖ.
Acts 17. 25.

Acts 14. 17.
17. 27.
Rom. 1. 19.
2. 15.

If it be said, that having such Grace is inconsistent with the want of an explicit Knowledge of *Christ*, and of Faith in him ; why may not we say, that as probably (so St. Chrysostome, *vid. Mont. App. 1.*) most good People before our Lord's coming received Grace without any such Knowledge or Faith ; that as to Idiots and Infants our Saviour's meritorious Performances are applied (in a manner unknowable by us) without so much as a Capacity to know or believe any thing ; that so we (to whom God's Judgments are inscrutable, and his Ways uninvestigable) know not how Grace may be communicated unto, and *Christ's* Merits may avail for other ignorant Persons. In respect to whom we may apply that of St. John ; *The light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not.* However that such Persons may have a Grace capacitating them to arrive to that Knowledge and Faith, to which fuller Communications of Grace are promised ; so that in reasonable Esteem (as we shall presently shew) the Revelation of Evangelical Truth, and the Gift of Faith may be supposed to be conferred upon all Men—so that we may apply to them that in the Revelation ; *Behold, I stand at the door and knock ; if any man will hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in unto him, and sup with him, and he with me ;* (that is, Behold, I allure every Man to the Knowledge and embracing of Christianity ; if any Man will open his Mind and Heart ; so as to comply with my Solicitations, I am ready to bestow upon him the Participation of Evangelical Mercies and Blessings) and to such Persons those Promises and Rules in the Gospel, may appertain ; *He that asketh receiveth, He that seeketh findeth ; to him that knocketh it shall be opened : The heavenly Father will give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him. He that is faithful in the use of the least grace shall be rewarded. And, to him that bath (or that diligently keepeth and husbandeth what he hath) shall more be given ?*

Rom. 11. 33.

John 1. 5.

Αποκ. 3. 20.
Εἰ τυφλοὶ ᾗτε ἐκ ἂν εἴχετε ἀμαρτίαν.
Joh. 9. 41.
15. 22.

Luke 11. 10.
13.

Luke 19. 17.
19. 26.

And how God sometimes dealeth with such Persons the eminent Instances of St. Paul and Cornelius do shew. But concerning this Point, I spake somewhat before, and have perhaps been too large now ; I shall only add that Saying of

Puto quod pius sensus non debeat in ea quaestione turbari, quæ de omnium & non omnium hominum conversione generatur; si ea quæ clara sunt non de his quæ occulta sunt obscuremus, & dān proaciter insistimus clausis excludamur ab apertis, &c. Lib. 1. cap. 8.

the wise Writer *de Voc. Gen.* A pious Mind (saith he) should not, I think, be troubled at that question, which is made concerning the Conversion of all, or not all Men; if we will not obscure those things which are clear, by those things which are secret; and while we wantonly insist upon things shut up, we be not excluded from those which are open and plain: Which in effect is the same with this; that since we are plainly taught, that our Lord is the Saviour of all Men; and it is consequent thence, that he hath procured Grace sufficiently capacitating all Men to obtain Salvation; we need not perplex the Business, or obscure so apparent a Truth, by debating how that Grace is imparted; or by labouring overmuch in reconciling the Dispensation thereof with other Dispensations of Providence.

SERMON XLI.

The Doctrine of Universal Redemption asserted and explained.

I TIM. IV. 10.

—The living God; who is the Saviour of all Men, especially of those that believe.

5. **J**ESUS is the Saviour of all Men, as the Conductor of all Men into and through the way of Salvation. It is a very proper Title, and most due to those brave Captains, who by their Wisdom and Valour have freed their Country from Straits and Oppressions. So were those Judges and Princes, who anciently delivered Israel from their Enemies, commonly stiled: In the time of their trouble (say the Levites in *Nehemiah*) when they cried unto thee, thou heardst them from Heaven, and according to thy manifold mercies thou gavest them Saviours, who saved them out of the hand of the enemy; so are Othniel and Ehud particularly called; and Moses signally: The same (saith St. Stephen of him) did God send to be ἀρχοντα καὶ λυτρωτήν, a Commander and a Saviour (or Redeemer) to the Children of Israel; for that he by a worthy and happy Conduct did free them from the Egyptian Slavery. And thus was Demetrius by the Athenians (for his delivering them from the Macedonian Subjection, and restoring their Liberty to them) entitled εὐεργέτης καὶ σωτήρ, a Benefactor and Saviour. Thus with greatest Reason is Jesus so called, as being ἀρχηγός τοῦ σωτηρίας, the Captain of Salvation (so he is called by the Apostle to the Hebrews) ἀρχηγός ζωῆς (the Captain of Life, as St. Peter names him, the chief Leader unto eternal Life) ἀρχηγός πίστεως (the Captain of our Faith; he that hath revealed that saving Doctrine, which is the Power of God to Salvation) and these Titles we have conjoyned by St. Peter in the Acts; Him hath God exalted, ἀρχηγόν καὶ σωτήρα, as a Captain and a Saviour, to give repentance unto Israel and remission of Sins. This he is to us several Ways, by Direction both instructive and exemplary; by his Protection and Governance; by his mating and quelling the Enemies of Man's Salvation; which Things more specially and compleatly he hath performed in respect to faithful Christians, yet in a manner also he hath truly done them, for and toward all Men; as we shall distinctly consider.

6. Jesus

6. *Jesus is the Saviour of all Men* (we say) as having perfectly discovered and demonstrated the Way and Means of Salvation; the gracious Purposes of God concerning it; the Duties required by God in order to it: The great Helps and Encouragements to seek it; the mighty Determents from neglecting it; the whole Will of God, and Concernment of Man in relation thereto; briefly, all saving Truths he hath revealed unto all Men; *Mysteries of Truth, which were hidden from Ages and Generations*, which no Fancy of Man could invent, no Understanding could reach, no Reason could by Discussion clear (concerning the Nature, Providence, Will and Purpose of God; the Nature, Original and State of Man; concerning the Law and Rules of Practice, the Helps thereto, the Reward thereof, whatever is important for us to know in order to Happiness) he did plainly discover, and bring to light; he did with valid Sorts of Demonstration assert and confirm. The doing which (as having so much Efficacy) toward Salvation, (and being ordinarily so necessary thereto) is often called *saving*; as particularly by St. James; when he saith, *He that turns a Sinner from the error of his way shall save a Soul from death.* And by St. Paul; *Take heed to thy word and doctrine, for so doing thou shalt save thy self, and thy hearers,* That our Lord hath thus (according to his Design, and according to reasonable Esteem) *saved all men*, we are authorized by the holy Scripture to say; for he is there represented to be *the light of the World*; *the true light that enlighteneth every Man coming into the World*; *the day-spring from on high, which hath visited us, to give light to them that sit in darkness and the shadow of death, and to guide our feet in the way of peace.* By him *the saving grace of God hath appeared unto all Men.* By him (as Esay prophesied, and St. John the Baptist applied it) *all flesh did see the Salvation of God.* Of him it was also foretold (as St. Paul teacheth us) *I have set thee for the light of the Nations, that thou shouldest be for Salvation unto the ends of the Earth.* Coming he preached Peace *τοῖς μακρὰν καὶ τοῖς ἐγγύς* (*longè latèque*) *to them that were far, and them that were near, that is, to all Men every where.* While I am in the World, said he, *I am the light of the World*; shining, like the Sun, indifferently unto all; and when he withdrew his corporal Presence, he farther virtually diffused his Light, for he sent his Messengers with a general Commission and Command to teach all Men concerning the Benefits procured for them, and the Duties required from them; *Going into the World, make all Nations Disciples, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you.* *Going into the World, preach the Gospel unto every Creature* (or to the whole Creation:) So it ought to be, that in his Name should be preached repentance and remission of Sins unto all Nations. And, such was the Tenour of the Apostolical Commission; *Thou shalt be witness for him toward all Men*; said Ananias to St. Paul. Accordingly, in compliance with those Orders, did the Apostles, in God's Name, instruct and admonish all Men, plainly teaching, seriously inviting to, strongly persuading, and earnestly entreating all Men to embrace the Truth, and enjoy the Benefits of the Gospel, and consequently to be saved: *The Times of Ignorance* (saith St. Paul) *God having winked at, doth now invite all Men every where to repent*; And, *We are Embassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us, We pray you in Christ's stead, be reconciled to God—we pray you, you as Members of that World, which God was in Christ reconciling to himself*; And, *We preach Christ—Warning every Man, and teaching every Man in all Wisdom, that we may present every Man perfect in Christ Jesus* (or render every Man a good Christian.) Thus was the Gospel according to our Saviour's Intent and Order preach'd (as St. Paul saith of it) *ἐν παντί τῇ κτίσει τῇ ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ*, in the whole Creation under Heaven; thus did God shew, That he would have all Men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the Truth; whence our Lord (in regard to the Nature and Design of his Performance in this kind) is the common Saviour, as the common Master of Truth, and Enlightner of the World, and Proclaimer of God's Will to Mankind.

If now it be required or objected; why then is not the Gospel revealed unto Men? How comes it to pass, that no Sound of this saving Word, no Glimpse of this heavenly Light doth arrive to many Nations? How can so general and large Intention consist with so particular and sparing Execution? What Benefit can we imagin them capable to receive from this Performance of our Saviour, who still do sit in total Ignorance of the Gospel, in Darkness, and the shadow of Death?

Luke 1. 74. *How can they call upon him, in whom they believe not ? And how can they believe in*
 Matt. 4. 16. *him, of whom they have not heard ?*
 Rom. 10. 14.

To this Suggestion, I answer,

i. That God's Intentions are not to be interpreted, nor his Performances estimated by Events, depending on the Contingency of human Actions, but by his own Declarations and Precepts, together with the ordinary Provision of competent Means, in their own Nature sufficient to produce those Effects which he declares himself to intend, or to perform. What he reveals himself to design he doth really design it, what he says, that he performeth, he (according to moral Esteem, that is so far as to ground Duties of Gratitude and Honour, Proceedings of Justice and Reward) doth perform, although the Thing upon other Accounts be not effected.

Thus for Instance, God would have all Men to live together here in Peace, in Order, in Health, conveniently, comfortably, chearfully ; according to Reason, with Vertue and Justice ; and in the best State toward Happines ; for these Purposes he hath endowed them with reasonable Faculties, he hath engraven on their Minds a natural Law, he hath furnished them with all Sorts of Instruments and Helps conducive to those Ends, he promoteth them by Dispensations of Providence, and (probably) by internal influences of Grace ; yet often all those Means (by the perverseness and stupidity of Men) do prove ineffectual, so that Wars, Disorders, Diseases, Vices, Iniquities and Oppressions, Troubles and Miseries do commonly abound in the World. Likewise God desires, that in his Church, Knowledge and Piety, Peace and Charity, and good Order should grow and flourish ; to which Purposes he hath appointed Teachers to instruct, and Governours to watch over his People ; he hath obliged each Man to advise and admonish his Brother ; he hath declared holy Precepts and Rules of Practice ; he hath propounded vast Encouragements and Rewards, and threatned dreadful Punishments ; he hath promised and doth afford requisite Assistances ; being himself always present and ready to promote those Ends by his Grace ; yet notwithstanding by the voluntary neglect or abuse of these Means (the Guides being blind, negligent, unfaithful ; or the People being indocile, sluggish, refractory ; or both perverted with bad Affections) often Ignorance, Error and Impiety prevail, Love is cool and dead, Schisms and Factions are rife in the Church. Which Events are not to be conceived derogatory to God's good-Will and good-Intentions, or to his kind and careful Providence toward Men ; but we are notwithstanding to esteem and acknowledge him the Author and Donor of those good Things ; in respect to them no less blessing and praising him, than if they were really accomplished by Man's Concurrence and Compliance ; he having done his Part in that due Measure and Manner, which Wisdom prompts ; having indeed done the same, as when they are affected. So God having expressly declared, that he would have all Men to know and embrace the Gospel, having made a universal Promulgation thereof, having sent forth *Apostles* to disseminate it every-where, having obliged every Man to confer his best Endeavour toward the Propagation thereof ; if by the want of Fidelity, Zeal, or Industry in them, to whom this Care is intrusted, or upon whom this Duty is incumbent ; or if by the Carelessness and Stupidity of those, who do not regard what is done in the World ; or if by Mens voluntary shutting their Eyes, or stopping their Ears (as the *Jews* did of old to the Prophetical Instructions and Admonitions) God's Heavenly Truth becometh not universally known ; 'tis not reasonable to impute this defaultance to God, or to conceive him therefore not universally to desire and design Mens Instruction and Salvation consequent thereon. Let me (for the Illustration of this Matter) put a Case, or propound a Similitude. Suppose a great Kingdom consisting of several Provinces should have revolted from their Sovereign ;, disclaiming his Authority, neglecting and disobeying his Laws ; That the good Prince, out of his Goodness and Pity toward them (and upon other good Considerations moving him thereto, suppose the Mediation of his own Son) instead of Prosecuting them with deserved Vengeance, should grant a general Pardon and Amnesty, in these Terms, or upon these Conditions, that whoever of those Rebels willingly should come in, acknowledge his Fault, and promise future Loyalty, or Obedience to his Laws declared to them, should be received into Favour, have Impunity, enjoy Protection, and obtain Rewards from him.

Farther

Farther, for the effectuating this gracious intent, suppose that he should appoint and commissionate Messengers, empowering and charging them to divulge the Purport of this Act of Grace to all the People of that Kingdom. Admit now, that these Messengers should go forth, and seat themselves only in some Provinces of that Kingdom, proclaiming this universal Pardon (universal as to the Design, and as to the Tenour thereof) only in those, neglecting others; or that, striving to propagate it farther, they should be rejected and repelled; or that from any the like Cause the Knowledge thereof should not reach to some remoter Provinces; it is plain, that indeed the effect of that Pardon would be obstructed by such a Carriage of the Affair; but the Tenour of that Act would not thereby be altered; nor would the Failure in Execution (consequent upon the Ministers or the Peoples Misbehaviour) detract from the real Amplitude of the Prince's Intent; no more, than the wilful Incredulity, Refusal, or Non-compliance of some Persons, where the Business is promulged and notified, would prejudice the same. 'Tis plain the Prince meant favourably toward all, and provided carefully for them; although by accident (not imputable to him) the designed Favours and Benefits do not reach all. The Case so plainly suits our Purpose, that I need not make any Application. The *holy Fathers* do by several like Similitudes endeavour to illustrate this Matter, and somewhat to assail the Difficulty. They compare our Saviour to the Sun, who shines indifferently to all the World, although there be some private Corners and secret Caves, to which his Light doth not come; although some shut their Windows or their Eyes and exclude it; although some are blind and do not see it. That mystical Sun of Righteousness (saith St. Ambrose) is risen to all, came to all, did suffer and rose again for all ----- but if any one doth not believe in Christ, he defrauds himself of the general Benefit. As if one shutting the Windows should exclude the Beams of the Sun, the Sun is not therefore not risen to all. They compare our Lord to a Physician, who professes to relieve and cure all that shall have recourse to his help; but doth cure only those, who seek for Remedy, and are willing to take the Medicine; because all (saith * St. Ambrose again) do not desire Cure, but most do shun it, lest the Ulcer should smart by Medicaments, therefore *volentes curat, non astringit invitos*; he cures only the willing, doth not compel those that are unwilling; they only receive Health, who desire Medicine. Evangelical Grace, say they, is like a Fountain standing openly, to which all Men have free access; at which all Men may quench their thirst; if they will enquire after it, and go thereto. The Fountain of Life (saith Arnobius) is open to all; nor is any Man hindered or driven from the right of drinking it. The Covenant of Grace is, say they, a Door standing open to all, whereinto all have liberty to enter ---- when an entrance (saith St. Chrysostome) being opened to all, and there being nothing that hinders, some being wilfully taught abide without, they have no other but their own wickedness to impute their destruction unto.

And again he puts the Question, *If Christ enlighteneth every Man that cometh into the World, how is it that so many remain unenlightened?* &c. To which he answers, that *If some wilfully shutting the eyes of their Minds, will not receive the beams of this light, it is not from the nature of light that those remain still in darkness, but from the wickedness of those who wilfully deprive themselves of the gift of it,* &c.

μὴ τῶν καλῶσα τιμῆς· οἱ δὲ μὴ θέλοντες ἀπολαύσαι τῆς δωρεᾶς ταύτης, ἑαυτοῖς δίκαιοι ταύτην ἀνέειν λογισσάμενοι τὴν πηγήν.
Chrys. in Joh. 1. homil. 7.

* *Mysticus Sol ille justitia omnibus ortus est, omnibus venit, omnibus passus est, & omnibus surrexit*—*si quis autem non credit in Christum, generali beneficio se fraudat, ut si quis clausis fenestris radios solis excludat, non ideo Sol non ortus est omnibus,* &c.
Amb. in Psal. 118. Ser. 8.

Si dies omnibus aequaliter nascitur, & si Sol super omnes pari & aequali luce diffunditur, quanto magis Christus Sol & dies verus, in Ecclesia sua lumen vite aeternae pari aequalitate largitur? Cypr. Ep. 76.

Ἀκούσατε ἔν οι μακρὸν· ἀκούσατε οἱ ἐγγύς· ἐκ ἀπεκρύβη τινας ὁ λόγος· φῶς ἐστὶ κοινὸν, ἐπιλάμψαται πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις· ὁ δὲ εἰς Κιμμέριον ἐν λόγῳ. Clem. Alex. Protrep.

Hear ye that are far: hear ye that are near: the word is not hid to any: 'tis a common light: it shineth to all men; there is no Cimmerian to the Word.

Nunquid non medicus idcirco proponit in publico, ut omnes se ostendat velle salvare si velint. Ambr. l. Tom. 2.

* *Venit*—*ut vulnera nostracuraret, sed quia non omnes medicinam expetunt, sed plerique refugiunt, ne medicamentis compungatur vis ulceris, ideo volentes,* &c. Ambr. de David. 3. 11.

Patet omnibus fons vitae, neque ab jure potandi quisquam prohibetur, aut pellitur. Arnob. lib. 2.

Ὅταν δὲ εἰσὶν πᾶσιν ἀνεωγμέναις, ὅ μιν εὐδὸς τῆς κοινότητος· οὐδὲν, ἐξελοκα- κισαίνεσθαι τινες ἐξω μὴσιν, παρ' ἑδὲνα ἐ- τερον, ἀλλ' ἡ παρὰ τὴν οἰκίαν πωλεῖται ἀποδομνῆται. Chrys. in 1 Joh. homil. 7.

Εἰ φωτίζει πάντα ἀνθρώπων ἐρχόμενον εἰς τὸ κόσμον, πῶς ἀφ' οὗτοι μεμνηκασιν τοσούτοι; ὁ δὲ δὴ πάντες ἐπὶ γῶσιν τῆς Χρυσῆς τὸ σέβας· ὡς ἐν φωτίζει πάντα ἀνθρώπων; τότε εἰς αὐτὸν ἡκον· εἰ δὲ τί- νες ἐκόντες τὸς δὲ διανοίας ἀφ' αὐτῶν μύ- σαιες ἐκ ἐδελισαν ἀφ' αὐτῶν τῆς φω- τὸς τῆς τῶν αὐτῶν, ὡς παρὰ τὴν τῆς φω- τὸς τῆς τῶν αὐτῶν, ἀλλὰ παρὰ τὴν κακουργίαν τῶν ἐκόντων ἀποσερνήσαν ἑαυτοὺς τῆς δωρεᾶς· ἡ μὲν δὲ χάρις εἰς πάντας ἐκτε- χύται—πάντως ὁμοίως προσημερῆται, ὡς

ὡς αἰὲρ πνεῦσιν, ὡς φῶς χύσιν;
 ἢ ὡρῶν ἀναγὰς, ἢ κλισεως δειαν
 Naz. Orat. 40.

St. Gregory Nazianzen resembles the Grace of Baptism (as to its Community and Freedom of Use) to the Breathing of the Air, to the Spreading of Light, to the Vicissitude of Seasons to the Aspect of the Creation; things most obvious and common to all.

If this Answer do not fully satisfy, I adjoyn farther,

2. That God beside that ordinary Provision is ready to interpose extraordinarily in disclosing his Truth to them who are worthy of such Favour, and fit to receive it; and that God's general Desire and Design of revealing his Truth to all Men is very well consistent with his providential (not only negative and permissive, but even positive and active) withholding the Discovery thereof from some Persons, yea some Nations; for that neither his Wisdom, Goodness, or Justice might permit him, that he should impart that Revelation to such Persons whom he seeth altogether indisposed to comply therewith, and unfit to profit thereby; who have extremely abused the lesser Graces, and not improved or mis-improved the lesser Talents afforded them; detained inferiour Truths in Unrighteousness, and *have not liked to retain God in their knowledge*, have therefore justly been delivered up to a reprobate Sense; who have so depraved their Minds with wicked Prejudices and Affections, that the Truth being offered to them, they would certainly either stupidly neglect it, or scornfully reject it, (or if admitting it in shew) would unworthily abuse it; so that from the imparting the Means of knowing it, no Glory to God, no Benefit to Man would accrue, but rather Contempt of God, and Prejudice to Men would ensue upon it: there are some Persons of that wicked and *Gigantick* disposition (contracted by evil Practice) that, should one offer to instruct them in Truth, or move them to Piety, would be ready to say with *Polyphemus* in *Homer*,

Rom. 1. 18.
28.

Isa. 30. 10.

Odys. 1.

Νήπιος εἰ ὦ ξείν', ἢ πλόθεν εἰληλμένος,
 "Ὅς με θεὸς κέλευι ἢ δειδόμεν, ἢ ἀλέαδας. •

*Friend, you are a Fool, or a great Stranger to me,
 who advisest me to fear or regard the Deity.*

Exod. 5. 2.

Prov. 1. 24.

Luke 11. 33.

John 14. 22.

Or (which is the same) with *Pharaoh*: *Who is the Lord, that I should obey his voice? I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go*, (or neither will I do as you in God's Name admonish me) who like that unhappy Prince, by no efficacy of Arguments, no wonders of Power are to be convinced of their Folly, or converted from their Wickedness: Some, like those of *Chorazin* and *Bethsaida*, whom not all the powerful Discourses spoken to them, all the mighty Works done in them, sufficient to have brought *Tyre* and *Sidon* to Repentance, can induce to mind or obey the Truth; unto which sort of People (except upon some particular Occasions, and for special Reasons) it is not expedient that divine Truth should be exposed. We may also observe how our Lord being asked by St. *Jude* a Question like to ours; *Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thy self unto us, and not to the world?* thus resolves it; *If a man love me he will keep my words, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him*: implying the ordinary Reason of God's making a difference in the Discoveries of himself to be the previous Disposition and Behaviours of Men toward God; and interpretatively toward our Lord himself.

Matt. 3. 8.

1 Cor. 12. 7.

That God doth commonly observe this Method (plainly suitable to divine Justice, Wisdom and Goodness) to dispense the Revelation of his Truth according to Mens disposition to receive it, and aptness to make a fruitful and worthy Use of it, *to bring forth fruits worthy of repentance*, as Saint *John Baptist* spake; and to withhold it from those who are, indisposed to admit it, or unfit to profit by it: We may from divers express Passages and notable Instances (besides many probable Intimations) of *Scripture* learn. We may on the one hand observe, that those

Matt. 4. 18.

Joh. 1. 24, 37.

Matt. 19. 27.

Luke 19. 8, 9.

John 1. 47.

Luke 19. 8, 9.

Matt. 21. 31.

Luke 5. 31.

whom our Saviour did chuse to call, were Persons disposed easily upon his Call to comply: to forsake their Fathers, and their Nets; to leave their Receipts of Custom; to relinquish all (Relations, Occupations, Estates) and to follow him; faithful *Israelites*, without Guile, like *Nathanael* (that is, as is probably conjectured, St. *Bartholomew*) Men honestly Devout, and Charitable, like *Zachew*; that he chose to converse with Publicans and Sinners, Men apt to be convinced of their

their Errours, and touched with the Sense of their Sins; apt, to see their Need of Mercy and Grace, and therefore ready to entertain the Overtures of them; that he blesses God for revealing his Mysteries to Babes (to innocent and well-meaning, unprejudicate and uncorrupted Persons) such as if Men were not, they could in no wise enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, or become Christians; those *poor in Spirit*, of whom is the kingdom of heaven; those foolish things which God chuses as most fit objects of his Mercy and Grace; that he enjoin'd his Disciples, in their Travels for the Promulgation and Propagation of the Gospel, to inquire concerning the Worthiness or Fitness of Persons, and accordingly to make more close Applications to them: (*Into what city or village ye enter, enquire who therein is worthy*; and entering in abide there) Of this proceeding we have a notable Instance in *Cornelius*, who for his honest Piety (correspondent to the Proportion of Knowledge vouchsafed him) was so acceptable to God, that in regard thereto he obtained from him the Revelation of Truth in a peculiar and extraordinary Manner. And *St. Paul* was another most remarkable Example thereof; who for the like Reason was so wonderfully called, as himself intimates, describing himself to have been *ζηλωτὴς θεῷ*, zealously affected toward God, according to the righteousness in the law, blameless; one that had continually * behaved himself with all good conscience toward God; who even in the Persecution of God's Truth did proceed with an honest Meaning, and according to his Conscience, for which Cause he saith, that God had Mercy on him; foreseeing how willingly he would embrace the Truth, and how earnestly promote it: We may also observe, how in the Acts of the Apostles, the Holy Spirit commonly directed the Apostles to such Places, where a competent Number of People were well disposed to receive the Truth; who were *εὐθετοὶ εἰς τὸ βασιλεῖαν τοῦ θεοῦ*, well-disposed to the Kingdom of heaven, and consequently by God's Fore-sight, (*τεταγμένοι εἰς ζωὴν αἰώνιον*) ordained to have the word of eternal life (the *τὸ σωτηριον θεοῦ*, as it is in a parallel Place called) discovered to them; such People as the *Beræans*, Men ingenuous and tractable; who consequently entertained the Word, *μετ' ὁπίας προθυμίας*, with all promptitude and alacrity. To such Persons God sometimes by extraordinary Revelation directed the Apostles to preach; as to the *Corinthians*, in respect to whom, the Lord spake to *St. Paul* in a Vision, saying, *Fear not, but speak and be not silent, for I am with thee, because—πολὺς ἔστι μοι λαός*, there is for me much people in this city; much people whom I see disposed to comply with my Truth. So in behalf of the *Macedonians*, ἀνὴρ τις Μακεδόνων, a certain man of Macedonia was in a Vision seen to *St. Paul*, exhorting him and saying, *Passing into Macedonia help us*: Thus on that Hand doth God take special Care that his Truth be manifested to such as are fitly qualified to embrace it and use it well: Thus is God ready to make good that Answer of *Pothinus* (Bishop of *Lions*, and immediate Successour to *St. Irenæus*) to the *Præfect*, who asking him who was the Christians God, was answered, *ἐάν τις ἀξιόγνων, If thou be worthy, thou shalt know*; thus (as the *Wise man* divinely saith) the divine Wisdom, ἀξιόσπουδος, Goeth about seeking such as are worthy of her; sheweth her self favourable unto them in their ways, and meeteth them in every thought.

And on the other hand, that God with-holds the special Discoveries of his Truth, upon Account of Men's Indispositions and Demerits, may likewise very plainly appear. We may suppose our Lord to have observed himself, what he ordered to his Disciples; *Not to give that which is holy to Dogs*, nor to cast their Pearls before Swine (not to expose the holy and precious Truth to very leud and fierce People, who would snarl at it and trample upon it) we may allow God in the Dispensation of his Truth and Grace to do what he bids the Apostles to do: Before he enters into any House, or applies himself to any Person, to * examine whether the House or Person be worthy; that is willing to receive him, and apt to treat him well; if not, to decline them. Our Lord we see did leave even his own Country, seeing Men there were not disposed to use him with due Honour and Regard; seeing they were possessed with vain Prejudices, apt to obstruct the Efficacy of his divine Instructions and miraculous Performances; so that he was not likely (according to the ordinary way of divine Providence) to produce any considerable Effect towards their Conversion. He could not (it is said) do many miracles there, because of their unbelief; he could not, that is (according to the most just and wise Rules he did observe, he would not do them; because he perceived the doing them would not conduce to any good purpose; that they were not apt

to look upon those Works as the Effects of divine Power and Goodness, performed for their Benefit (for inducing them to Faith and Repentance) but rather that the doing them would expose God's Mercy to Contempt or Reproach, at least to Neglect or Disregard. Hence our Saviour declined conversing with Persons indisposed to (those *ἄνθρωποι*, who cannot *δέχονται τὸ τῆς πνεύματος*.) receive Benefit by his Instruction and Example; to grow wiser or better by his Conversation; as the Pharisees and Scribes; Men prepossessed with corrupt and vicious Affections, obstructive to the Belief of his Doctrine, and Observance of his Laws; and worldly Persons; proud and self-conceited, crafty and deceitful, covetous, ambitious and worldly Men, incorrigibly tainted with that *φρόνησις τῆς σαρκὸς*, carnal wisdom and affection; which is enmity to God; so that it is not subject to the Law of God, nor can be; inextricably engaged in the Friendship of the World, which is enmity to God: To such Men the Gospel would certainly be a Scandal or a Folly: They would never be able to relish or digest the Doctrine of Purity, Self-denial, Patience, and the like Doctrines opposite to carnal Sense and Conceit which it teacheth. From such wise and prudent Men (conceited of their little Wisdoms, and doting upon their own Fancies) God did conceal those heavenly Mysteries; which they would have despised and derided: Those many wise according to the Flesh, many powerful; many noble, God did not chuse to call into his Church: Accordingly we may observe in the History of the Apostles, that God's Spirit did prohibit the Apostles passing through some Places, it discerning how unsuccessful (at those Seasons in those Circumstances, according to those Dispositions of Men) their Preaching would be: *Passing through Phrygia and Galatia, being hindered by the Spirit to speak the word in Asia; coming to Mysia, they assayed to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit suffered them not.* Moreover there is plainly the like Reason, why God should withhold his saving Truth from some People, as why he should withdraw it from others; when it is abused or proves fruitless: But of such withdrawing we have many plain Instances, attended with the Declaration of the Reasons of them, Our Lord prophesied thus concerning the Jews; *I say unto you, that the Kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and shall be given to a Nation doing the Fruits thereof;* they when our Saviour would have gathered them under his Wings wilfully refusing. Our Lord charged his Disciples, when by any they were repulsed or neglected in their preaching, to leave those Persons and Places *shaking off the Dust from their feet*, in token of an utter (*εἰς μαρτύριον ἐπ' αὐτοὺς*) detestation and desertion of them: And accordingly we see them practising in their Acts; when they perceived Men perversely contradictory, or desperately senseless and stupid, so that they clamoured against the Gospel, and thrust it from them, they abstained from farther dealing with them, turning their Endeavours other-where, toward Persons of a more docile and ingenuous Temper; thence more susceptible of Faith and Repentance: *To you (say Paul and Barnabas to the contradicting and reproachful Jews) it was necessary that the Word of God should first have been spoken, but seeing you put it from (or thrust it away from you, ἀποδείδεσθε αὐτόν) and judge your selves unworthy of everlasting Life, we turn to the Gentiles.* So when the Church of Ephesus was grown cold in Charity, and deficient in good Works, God threatens to remove her Candlestick; or to withdraw from her that Light of Truth, which shone with so little beneficial Influence. It seems evident that God for the like Reasons may withhold the Discovery of his Truth, or forbear to interpose his Providence; so as to transmit Light thither, where Men's Deeds are so evil, that they will love Darkness rather than Light, where their Eyes are so dim and weak, that the Light will but offend, and by the having it, hurt them; where they by the having it declared to them, will only incur farther Mischief and Misery; it would prove to them but *ὀσμὴ θανάτου*, a deadly scent, as the most comfortable Perfumes are offensive sometimes and noxious to distemper'd Bodies. Wherefore as where the Light doth shine most clearly, it is Men's voluntary pravity, that by it many are not effectually brought to Salvation; so it is Men's voluntary depraving and corrupting themselves (misusing their natural Light, choaking the Seeds of natural Ingenuity, thwarting God's secret whispers and motions, complying with the Suggestions of the wicked one) so as to be rendered unfit for the susception of God's heavenly Truth and Grace, which hinders God (who proceedeth ordinarily with Men, in sweet and reasonable Methods, not in way of impe-

1 Cor. 2. 14.

Matt. 21. 31.

Rom. 8. 7.

James 4. 4.

1 John 2. 15.

1 Cor. 1. 23.

Matt. 11. 25.

1 Cor. 1. 26.

James 2. 5.

Acts 16. 6.

Matt. 21. 43.

Matt. 10. 14.

Luke 9. 5.

Acts 13. 52.

Acts 18. 6.

Acts 13. 46.

28. 16.

Apoc. 2. 5.

Καὶ τὰς ὕς

(ἡσυχίαν) τὸ

μὴ ἐγγίψαι

Chrys.

John 3. 19.

2 Cor. 2. 16.

impetuous Violence and Coaction) from dispensing them: We may say of such in the Words of the Prophet, *They have chosen their own ways, and their Soul delighteth in their Abominations: Your Iniquities have turned away these Things, and your Sins have with-helden good Things from you.* *Τῇ ἑαυτῶ ἀγαθότητι πᾶσιν ὁ κύριος ἐγγίζει μακρύνουμέν ὃ ἑαυτὸς ἡμεῖς δια τῆ ἀμαρτίας,* God doth by his goodness approach to all, but we set our selves at distance by Sin, saith St. Basil; and, *ὅπου αὐτο-περαιρεται πονηρία, ἐκεῖ καὶ ἀποχὴ τῆ χάριτος,* where there is self-chosen, or affected wickedness, there is a with-holding of Grace, saith another Father (apud Cyrill. Hier.) *2 Cor. 4. 3.* The Gospel, if it be hiddden, 'tis (as St. Paul says) *hiddden ἐν τοῖς ἀπολλυμένοις, in viris perditis, among lost Men* (that is, Men desperately gone in Wickedness, incorrigible, unreclaimable People) *in whom the God of this World* (that is, as St. Chrysostome expounds it, not the Devil, but the good God himself) *hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, so that the light of the glorious Gospel hath not shined to them* (πῶς ἂν ἐτύφλωσεν; how then did God blind them? Saith St. Chrysostome) *ἐκ ἐνεργήσεως εἰς τὸ πᾶν, ἀπαρχή* not by any efficacy of his upon them toward that; *Ey on that: ἀλλ' ἀφ' οὗ καὶ συγχωρήσεως, but by Permission and Concession;* for so the Scripture is wont to speak: *Ἐπεὶ οὖν ὅτι αὐτοὶ ἠπίστησαν πρῶτοι, καὶ ἀναξίους ἑαυτοὺς ᾔσκησάντων τὸ ἰδεῖν τὰ μυστήρια, καὶ αὐτοὺς λοιπὸν ἔασεν· ἀλλὰ πᾶσι ποιεῖν; πρὸς βίαν ἔλκεν, καὶ ἐκκαλύπτει μὴ βυλομένοις ἰδεῖν; ἀλλὰ μάλλον αὐτὸν καπερόνησαν, καὶ ἐκ αὐτῶν εἶδον.* Seeing (saith he) they disbelieved first, and constituted themselves unworthy to see the mysteries, even God at last let them alone; for what should he have done? should he have drawn them violently, and discovered it to them being unwilling to see? they would then have more despised it and not have seen it. God is ever willing and ready to dispense his Mercies and Favours, but he is not wont to do it extraordinarily (or beside the course of his ordinary Provision) but in a proper and fit Season; (in that *καιρὸς ὑπερσδεκτός,* acceptable Time and Day of Salvation, when he seeth Men capable of receiving them) which Season commonly dependeth upon Man's Will and Choice, or the results of them. *Καθόλου γὰρ ὁ θεὸς οἶδεν τίς τε ἀξίος τῆς ἀγαθότητος καὶ μή οὐδεν τὰ προσήκοντα ἐκείνοις δίδωσιν. Σωτὴρ γὰρ ὅστις ἐχέ τῆς μέν· τῆς δ' ἑτέρας πρὸς δὲ ὅσον ὁπλήθεισότητος· ἕκαστος ἔχει, τὴν ἑαυτοῦ δέειν εὐεργεσίαν* for (saith Clemens. Alex. in his 7th of the Stromata, where he clearly and fully affirms our present Doctrine) *Our Lord is not the Saviour of some, and not of others: but according as Men are fitly disposed, he hath distributed his Beneficence to all.* St. Augustine himself somewhere speaketh no less; or rather more: *Præcedit aliquid in peccatoribus* (saith he) *quo, quamvis nondum sint justificati, digni efficiantur justificatione: & idem præcedit in aliis peccatoribus quo digni sint obtusione.* But,

3. If all these Considerations do not thoroughly satisfy us concerning the Reason of God's Proceedings in this Case, we may consider that God's Providence is inscrutable and impenetrable to us; that (according to the Psalmist) *as God's mercy is in the Heavens, and his faithfulness reacheth to the Clouds; so his Righteousness is like the great Mountains* (too high for our Reason to climb) *and his Judgments, πολλὴ ἡ βυβλος,* a great Abyss, too deep for our feeble Understanding to fathom; that his ways are more subtle and spiritual than to be traced by our dim and gross Sight. So upon Contemplation of a like Case, although as it seems, hardly so obscure or unaccountable as this, the Cause concerning God's conditional Rejection of that People, whom he in a special manner had so much and so long favoured) St. Paul himself doth profess. That therefore although we cannot fully resolve the Difficulty, we notwithstanding without Distrust should adhere to those positive and plain Declarations, whereby God representeth himself seriously designing and earnestly desiring, *That all Men should come to the knowledge of the Truth; that none should perish, but that all should come to repentance;* not doubting but his declared Mind, and his secret Providence, although we cannot thoroughly discern or explain their Consistency, do yet really and fully conspire. But no farther at this Time.

SERMON XLII.

The Doctrine of Universal Redemption asserted and explained.

I TIM. IV. 10.

-----The living God ; who is the Saviour of all men, especially of those that believe.

8. **A**S Our Saviour was such to all Men by his Doctrine, or the general Discovery of all saving Truth ; so may he be esteemed such in regard to his exemplary Practice ; whereby upon the open Stage of the World, and in the common View of all that would attend unto him, He did represent a living Pattern of all Goodness ; by imitating which, we may certainly attain Salvation. He that will consider his Practice shall find it admirably fitted for general Instruction and Imitation ; calculated for all Places and all Sorts of People ; suited to the Complexions, to the Capacities, to the Degrees, to the Callings of all Men ; so that every Sort of Men may from it draw profitable Direction, may in it find a Copy, even of his particular Behaviour : For he was a great Prince, illustrious in Birth, excellent in Glory, and abounding in all Wealth, yet was born in Obscurity, lived without Pomp, and seemed to possess nothing ; so teaching Men of high rank to be sober, mild and humble, not to rest in, not to regard much, not to hug and cling to the Accommodations and Shews of worldly State ; teaching those of mean Degree to be patient, content and chearful in their Station. He was exceedingly wise and knowing, without Bound or Measure ; yet made no Ostentation of extraordinary Knowledge ; of sharp Wit, of deep Subtilty ; did not vent high, dark or intricate Notions ; had in his Practice no reaches and windings of Craft or Policy ; but was in his Doctrine very plain and intelligible, in his Practice very open and clear ; so that what he commonly said or did, not only Philosophers and Statesmen, but almost the simplest Idiots might easily comprehend ; so that those might thence learn not to be conceited of their superfluous Wisdom ; these not to be discouraged in their harmless Ignorance, both having thence an equally sufficient Instruction in all true Righteousness, a complete Direction in the Paths to Happiness, being thereby *σπουδαίοντες εἰς σωτηρίαν*, made wise and learned to Salvation. He did not immerse himself in the Cares, nor engage himself into the Businesses of this World ; yet did not withdraw himself from the Company and Conversation of Men : He retired often from the Crowd, that he might converse with God and heavenly Things ; he put himself into it, that he might impart good to Men, and benefit the World, declining no Sort of Society ; but indifferently conversing with all ; disputing with the Doctors and eating with the *Publicans* ; whence thereby both Men of contemplative and quiet Disposition or Vocations, and Men of busy Spirits, or of active Lives may be guided respectively ; those not to be morose, supercilious, rigid, contemptuous toward other Men ; these not to be so possessed or intangled with the World, as not to reserve some leisure for the culture of their Minds, not to employ some Care upon the Duty of Piety and Devotion ; both may learn, whether in private Retirement or in publick Conversation and Employment, especially to regard the Service of God and the Benefit of Men ; thus was the Example of our Saviour accommodated for all Men ; especially conducting them in the hardest and roughest Parts of the Way leading to Bliss, the Acclivities and Asperities of Duty ; Self-denial, or Neglect of worldly Glory and fleshly Pleasure,

Patience,

Patience, Humility, general Charity; shewing us the possibility of performing such Duties, and encouraging us thereto. Through these difficult and dangerous Passages (as a resolute Chieftain of Life) he undauntedly marched before us, charging, beating back, and breaking through all opposite Forces; all Enemies, all Temptations, all Obstacles; enduring painfully the most furious Assaults of the World; boldly withstanding and happily conquering the most malicious Rage of Hell; so that Victory and Salvation we shall be certain of, if we pursue his Steps, and do not basely (out of faintness or falshood) desert so good a Leader; we shall not fail of the unfading Crown, if *with Patience we run the Race that is set before us, looking unto the Captain and Perfector of our Faith, Jesus who for the joy proposed unto him, endured the Cross, despised the Shame, and hath set down at the right hand of the Throne of God.* Would it not raise and enflame any Courage to see his Commander to adventure so boldly upon all Hazards, to endure so willingly all Hardships; whom would not the Sight of such a * Forerunner animate and quicken in his Course; who by running in the streight Way of Righteousness, with Alacrity and Constancy, hath obtained himself a most glorious Crown, and holdeth forth another like thereto, for the Reward of those who follow him. Now as our Lord's Doctrine, so did his Example, in the Nature and Design thereof, respect and appertain to all Men, it being also like the Light of Heaven, a common Spectacle, a publick Guide (*to guide our steps in the way of Peace*) if it do not appear so, if it do not effectually direct all; it is by Accident and beside God's Intention; 'tis by the Fault of them who should propound it, or of them who have not Eyes fit, or worthy to behold it; briefly, what was said concerning the universal Revelation of Christian Doctrine may be applied to Christ's Practice.

9. *Jesus is the Saviour of all Men* as having combated and vanquished all the Enemies of Man's Welfare and Happiness; *dispossessing* them of all their Pretences and Usurpations over Man, disarming them of all their Power and Force against him; enabling us to withstand and overcome them: Man's Salvation hath many Adversaries of different Nature and kind; some directly oppugning it, some formally prejudicing it, some accidentally hindring it; some alluring, some forcing, some discouraging from it, or from the Means conducing to it; the chief of them we may from the Scripture (with consent of Experience) reckon to be the *Devil* with all his Envy and Malice, his Usurpations, his Delusions and his Temptations to Sin; the *World* with its Snares and Baits, its Violences, Persecutions and Menaces; the *Flesh* or natural Concupiscence, with its bad Inclinations and Propensities to evil; its Lusts and Pleasures; *Sin*, with its Guilt, and mischievous Consequences; the *Law* with its rigorous Exactions, hard Measure and harsh Boding; *Conscience* with its Accusations and Complaints, its Terrours and Anguishes; *Divine Anger* with its effects, *Death* and *Hell*: All these *our Lord* hath in several and suitable Ways defeated; as to their Malignity, Contrariety, or Enmity in respect of Man's Salvation; he hath (as *Zachary* prophesieth, in his *Benedictus*) *Saved us from our enemies, and from the hands of all that hate us: So that being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, we might (ἀφ' ὧν) safely and securely, without danger or fear serve him, in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of our life.*

The *Devil* (that Enemy, that Adversary, that Accuser, that Slanderer, that Murtherer, that greedy Lion, that crafty Serpent; the strong one, the mischievous one, the Destroyer) who usurped an Authority) and exercised a Domination over Mankind, as the Prince of this world; who made prize of them, captivated them at his pleasure; who detained them under the Power (or Authority of Darkness and Wickedness; who had the Power of Death, him our Saviour hath destroyed or defeated (κατήργησεν, as the *Apostle* Heb. 2. 14. to the *Hebrews* speaketh; that is, abolished him as to any farther pretence of Empire or Power over us) him he hath dejected from Heaven (*I saw Satan like lightning falling down from Heaven*) him he hath cast out: Now is the Judgment of this world, now shall the Prince of this world be cast out; all his works he hath dissolved; For this cause (saith *St. John*) the Son of God did appear, that he might dissolve the works of the Devil. He combated this strong one (this mighty and dreadful Foe of ours) and baffled him, and bound him, and disarmed him (taking away αὐτοῦ, the whole armour in which he trusted) and spoiled him (ταῖς σκευαῖς, Luke 11. 21.

rifled

—ὁ Χριστὸς ἐδὲν τὴν ἰσλὰς ποιήσας πρῶτον κατέλιπε τὸν ἀρχόντι τῷ κόσμῳ τὰτα. Athan. contra Apoll. p. 628.

Matt. 13. 28. Luke 11. 19. 1 Pet. 5. 8. Dragon. Apoc. 12. 3. G. Acts 10. 38. 1 John 2. 14. Apoc. 12. 9. John 12. 31. 16. 11. 14. 30. Ephes. 2. 2. 6. 12. 2 Cor. 4. 4. Coloss. 1. 13. Acts 26. 18. Acts 10. 38. 2 Tim. 2. 26.

κατήργησεν, as the *Apostle* Heb. 2. 14. to the *Hebrews* speaketh; that is, abolished him as to any farther pretence of Empire or Power over us) him he hath dejected from Heaven (*I saw Satan like lightning falling down from Heaven*) him he hath cast out: Now is the Judgment of this world, now shall the Prince of this world be cast out; all his works he hath dissolved; For this cause (saith *St. John*) the Son of God did appear, that he might dissolve the works of the Devil. He combated this strong one (this mighty and dreadful Foe of ours) and baffled him, and bound him, and disarmed him (taking away αὐτοῦ, the whole armour in which he trusted) and spoiled him (ταῖς σκευαῖς, Luke 11. 21.

Matt. 12. 29. Luke 11. 21.

Colos. 2. 15. *risted all his baggage, bare away all his Instruments of Mischief*) and plundered all his House; leaving him unable (without our fault, our baseness, our negligence) to do us Mischief; (as is intimated in the 12th of St. *Matthew*, and 11th of St. *Luke*) yea *he triumphed over* all those infernal Principalities and Powers, and exposed them (as St. *Paul* saith:) he imparted to his Disciples Ability to *trample upon all* by his power, by him all his Followers are so fortified as to *conquer the wicked one* (as St. *John* says) he affordeth light to discover *all his wiles and snares*; Strength and Courage to *withstand all his assaults, to repel all his fiery darts, to put him to flight*.

The World also (that is, the wicked Principles, the bad Customs, the naughty Conversation and Example which commonly prevail here among Men; alluring to evil and deterring from good; the Cares also, the Riches, the Pleasures, the Glories of the World, which possess or distract the Minds, satiate and cloy the Desires, employ all the Affections and Endeavours; take up the time of Men; all in the World which fastneth our Hearts to Earth, and to those low transitory Things; or which sink them down toward Hell; and which detain them from soaring toward Heaven) is an Enemy; an irreconcilable Enemy to our Salvation; the Friendship thereof being inconsistent with a Friendship in us toward the God of our Salvation; or in him toward us: For *the friendship of the world is enmity with God*; and, *If any man love the world, the friendship of the Father is not in him*. And this Enemy our Lord hath vanquished, and enabled us to overcome. Being of courage (saith he) *I have overcome the world*; he, by a constant Self-denial and Temperance, defeated the bewitching Pleasures, and flattering Glories of it; he, by an immoveable Patience, baffled the terrible Frowns, and outrageous Violences of it; he, by a resolute and invincible maintainance of Truth, in great measure routed and dissipated the Errours and Oppositions thereof; he, by a general and intense Charity, surmounted the Provocations, Envies and Enmities thereof; he did it himself for us, and he also enabled us to do it; furnishing us with sufficient Strength, and fit Weapons whereby we may combat and conquer it; may sustain and repel its Force; may shun and elude its baits; for, *every one that* (by Faith in him) *is born of God doth overcome the world: and this is the victory that overcomes the world, our faith: Who is he that overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?* In all these Things (that is in whatever concerns the World and its Enmity; Tribulation, or Distress, or Persecution, or Famine, or Nakedness, or Peril, or Sword) we are (saith St. *Paul*) *more than conquerors through him that loves us*; thanks be to God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ: Our Lord hath procured for us Hopes that will raise our Minds and Affections above the World; Objects employing our Care and Endeavour far beyond it; Satisfaction that will cheer our Hearts, and satiate our Desires without it; Comforts that will support and sustain our Spirits against all the Terrours, all the Assaults, all the Evils thereof; by his Means it is, that we have no reason either to love it, or to fear it, or to value it, or to be concerned about it; but to contemn it as a thing unworthy of us and below us.

The Flesh also (that is, all that within us of bodily Temper, or natural Constitution, which inclineth and swayeth us to vicious excess in sensual Enjoyments; which disposeth us to the inordinate Love of our selves, and of other Creatures; which *lusts against the spirit*, and is adversary thereto; which blindeth and darkeneth our Minds in the Apprehension of our Judgment concerning divine Things; which perverteth and disableth (enfeebleth) our Wills in the Choice and Prosecution of what is good; which discomposeth and disordereth the Affections and Passions of our Soul; which continually enticeth and seduceth us to sin) is also an Enemy; a very powerful, very treacherous, very dangerous and very mischievous Enemy to us and our Welfare; rendring us Enemies to God (for *the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be,*) being another law in our members, warring against the law of our mind, and *captivating us to the law of sin*; engendring and fostering those *fleshy lusts, which war against the soul*; whose Works and Fruits are all sorts of Intemperance, Impurity, Pride, Envy, Contentiousness; this capital Enemy of ours our Lord did in his own Person first subdue, rejecting all the Suggestions and thwarting the Impulses thereof; entirely submitting to and performing the Will of God; even in willingly drinking that Cup, which was so distastful, so grievous to natural Will and fleshly Desire. He so conquered the Flesh in himself for us; he also

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conquers it in us, by the Guidance and Assistance of his Grace enabling us to withstand it, and to overcome it. *The law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus* (saith St. Paul) *hath freed me from the law of sin and death.* He infuses a Light discerning those Foggs which steam from carnal Sense and Appetite; so that we may clearly discern divine Truths, the Will of God, the Way to Happiness; he inserteth Principles of spiritual Life and Strength counterpoising and overswaying corporeal and sensual Propensions; so that we can restrain sensual Desires, and compose irregular Passions; and submit readily to God's Will; and observe chearfully God's Law; and freely comply with the Dictates of the Spirit or of right Reason; he so continually aideth, encourageth and upholds us, that we can do all things through Christ that strengtheth us; so that by his Power and Help the flesh with its affections and lusts are crucified; the earthly members are mortified; the old man (which was corrupted according to deceitful lusts) is put off; the body of sin is so destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin; sin doth not reign in our mortal bodies, so that we (must) obey it in the lusts thereof; we are renewed in the spirit of our minds; and do put on the new man, which is created according to God in righteousness and true holiness.

Our Sins also are very grievous Enemies of ours, loading us with heavy Guilt, stinging us with bitter Remorse, and anxious Fear, keeping us under miserable Bondage, exposing us to extreme Mischief and Misery; them our Lord hath also routed and vanquished: In regard to this Performance was the Name *Jesus* assigned to him; as the Angel told *Joseph*: *She shall bear a Son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins*: [From their sins; taking in all the Causes and the Consequences of them; from all those spiritual Enemies, which draw us, or drive us into them; from the Guilt and Obnoxiousness to Punishment; the Terror and Anguish of Conscience; the Wrath and Displeasure of God following upon them; the Slavery under their Dominion; the final Condemnation and Sufferance of grievous Pains for them;] the Guilt of Sin he particularly freed us from; for he loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood. Christ died for Sinners (for us then being Sinners) that is, that he might deliver us from our Sins, with all their Causes, Adjuncts and Consequences. He bare our sins on his own body on the tree; the blood of Christ cleanseth us from all sin; he is the propitiation for our sins, and for the sins of the whole world; he was manifested to take away our sins; once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin (eis adēmon amartias, to the abolition of sin) by the sacrifice of himself; we are justified freely by God's Grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; by his obedience many are constituted righteous (or free from the Guilt and Imputation of Sin) he justifies the ungodly; covering their sins, and not imputing them unto them. So doth he wipe away the Guilt of Sin; and he voids the Condemnation passed for them; for there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus; who is there that can condemn, since Christ hath died, or rather hath risen again?

He hath also appeased God's Wrath for Sin, and removed the Effects of it, (the Punishment and Vengeance due to Sin and threatned for it.) So that being enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son; being justified by faith we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ: Jesus is the *ὁ ρούμενος*, who delivers us from the wrath to come; being justified by his blood, we shall be saved by him from wrath.

The Strength and Dominion of Sin he hath also broken; by the Grace afforded us, whereby we are able to resist and avoid it; so that sin henceforth shall not domineer over us, or reign in our mortal body: Being freed from sin we are enslaved to righteousness and made servants to God. The body of sin is destroyed, so that we no longer serve sin. Whence consequently he hath subdued, utterly weakned, or quite destroyed (as to any force or mischievous Influence upon us) those other Adversaries, which depend upon Sin, and by its Power oppose and afflict us.

Our Conscience is such an Enemy accusing us, condemning us, vexing us with the Memory and Sense of Sin; suggesting to us the Depth of our Guilt, and the Danger of our State, terrifying us with the Expectation of Punishment and Vengeance: But our Lord (by securing us of Mercy and Favour upon Repentance and sincere Obedience) hath silenced and stilled this Adversary; hath by his blood (as the Apostle to the Hebrews says) purged our conscience from dead works; hath delivered

Matt. 1. 21.
Ὁ Χριστὸς ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ ὁ κύριος ἡμῶν
τῷ γενεῇ τῶν ἀνθρώπων διὰ τὸ ἰδεῖν πᾶσιν
καταρτίζεσθαι τὸ πᾶν καὶ τὸ σωθῆναι, ἵνα
ὅλον τὸ ἄνθρωπον ἡ ἀμαρτία ἐνεχόμενον
πᾶσις ἀμαρτίας ἐλευθερώσῃ. *Damasus*
Epist. apud Theod. 5. 9. 1 Tim. 1. 15.

John 17. 19.
Heb. 2. 10.
Rom. 8. 2.
2 Cor. 4. 6.
1 Cor. 2. 15.
1 John 2. 27.
Eph. 5. 8.
Rom. 12. 2.
1 John 5. 3.
Phil. 2. 13.
Phil. 4. 13.
2 Cor. 3. 5.
Heb. 13. 21.
Gal. 5. 24.
Coloss. 3. 5. 2.
Eph. 4. 22.
Rom. 6. 6. 12.
Rom. 8. 13.
Heb. 12. 1.
Eph. 4. 23. 2.
10.
Coloss. 3. 10.

Heb. 12. 4.
Πεὶς ἀμαρτίας
αὐτῶν ἀνίσταται
ζόμνον.

Rev. 1. 5.
1 Pet. 1. 19.
1 Pet. 2. 24.
3. 18.
1 John 1. 7.
2. 2. 3. 5.
4. 10.
Heb. 1. 3. 9.
26. 28.
Rom. 3. 24.
Rom. 5. 19.
Rom. 4. 5. 6.
Rom. 8. 1.

Rom. 8. 34.
Rom. 5. 10. 1.
1 Thes. 1. 10.
Rom. 5. 7.

Rom. 6. 14.
Rom. 6. 12.
Rom. 6. 18.
22.
Rom. 6. 6.

Heb. 9. 14. 2.
15.

livered them, who through fear of death were all their life-time subject to bondage; so that thence we obtain a steady Peace of Mind, a joyful Satisfaction in the Service of God, a comfortable Hope of future Bliss: Peace, Comfort and Joy are the Adjuncts of that State he shall put us into, and the Fruits of that Spirit he bestoweth on us.

The Law also (in its rigour, as requiring exact Obedience, and as denouncing Vengeance to them who in any Point violate it;) is, by reason of our Weakness and Inability so perfectly to observe it, an Enemy to us; justifying no Man, perfecting no Man, causing, encreasing, aggravating, quickning, declaring sin; yielding occasion to sin of killing us, working wrath, ministering death and condemnation, subjecting us to a curse (as St. Paul teacheth us) but our Lord by mitigating and abating the extreme rigour thereof, by procuring an acceptance of sincere (though not accurate) Obedience, by purchasing and dispensing Pardon for Transgression thereof upon Repentance, by conferring competent Strength and Ability to perform it in an acceptable Degree, hath brought under this Adversary; hath redeemed us from the curse of the law; hath justified and imputed righteousness to us without the works of the law (without such punctual Performances as the Law exacts) we are delivered from the law (as to those Effects of it; the condemning, discouraging, enslaving us.) we cease to be under the Law (in those respects) being under Grace, being led by the Spirit (as St. Paul tells us.) The Law indeed is still our Rule, our Guide, our Governour; we are obliged to follow and obey it; but it ceases to be a Tyrant over us, a Tormentor of us.

Death is also an Enemy (the last Enemy, saith St. Paul, which shall be destroyed, is Death;) the Enemy, which naturally we most fear and abominate; that which would utterly destroy us.

This Enemy our Lord hath vanquished and destroyed: By his Death and Resurrection he opened the way to a happy Immortality; he abolished Death, and brought Life and Immortality to Light by the Gospel: He by his death defeated him that had the Power of Death; and delivered them, who by fear of Death were through their whole Life subject to Bondage; he pulled out Sin, which is the Sting of Death, and reversed the Sentence of Condemnation, to which we all stood obnoxious. The wages of Sin (that which we had deserved, and was by Law due to us for it) was Death; but the Gift of God is everlasting Life, by Jesus Christ our Lord.

Lastly Hell (that is utter Darknes, extreme Discomfort, intolerable and endless Misery) the most dismal of all Enemies, our Lord hath, by the Virtue of his Merits, and the Power of his Grace, put us into a Capacity of avoiding; he hath (as St. Paul before tells us) delivered us from the Wrath to come. O Hell, where is thy Victory? Death and Hell shall be cast into the Lake of Fire.

Thus hath our Lord in our Behalf vanquished and defeated every Thing that is opposite, or prejudicial to our Salvation and Welfare. Many indeed of these Things do in a more immediate, more peculiar, and more signal manner concern the faithful Members of the Christian Church, and are directly applied to them, yet all of them in some Sort, according to God's Design, and in respect to a remote Capacity, may be referred to all Men. They are Benefits which God intended for all Men, and which all Men (if they be not faulty and wanting to themselves) may obtain. How they more especially appertain to the Faithful, we may shew afterward.

APPLICATION.

1. Hence ariseth great Matter and Cause of glorifying GOD; both from the Thing it self, and its Extent: For the Magnitude of Beneficence is to be estimated, not only according to the degree of Quality, but according to its amplitude of Object; to redeem Any doth signify Goodness, to redeem Many doth encrease it, to redeem All doth advance it to the highest Pitch; the more are obliged, the greater is the Glory due to the Benefactor.

Hence the Earth being full of the Goodness of the Lord, the Lord being gracious unto all, and his Mercy being over all his Works, all Creatures partaking of God's Bounty, is so often insisted upon in those divine Hymns, as a Ground of Praise to God.

Some so do indeed speak of glorifying God for his discriminating Grace ; as if Grace the narrower it were, the better it were : But is not Selfishness and Envy at the bottom of this ? Is not this the Disposition of those in the Gospel, who murmured—*is thine Eye evil, because mine is good ?*

It is dangerous to restrain God's Benevolence and Beneficence within Bounds narrower than they really are ; thereby diminishing his Glory.

2. Hereby is discovered the general Obligation of Men to love God ; to praise him, to serve him in sense of his Goodness, in regard to his Beneficence, out of Gratitude toward him. If God hath been so kindly affected toward Men, and so careful of their Welfare, as for procuring and promoting their Salvation to provide a Saviour for them, to design his own beloved Son to that Performance, in Prosecution thereof depressing him into so low a State, exposing him to such Inconveniences and Indignities, such Crosses and Afflictions, how much then are all Men obliged to love him, as their gracious Friend and Benefactor ; to praise and celebrate him for his Favour and Mercy, to render all Blessings and Thanks unto him ? This certainly is the Duty of all, if the Redemption in God's Design reach to all ; otherwise in reality it lieth on few, in Practice it could scarce touch any. They cannot be obliged to thank God for their Redemption, who are not obliged to him for the Thing it self ; they cannot heartily resent the Kindness, who are not assured that it extends to them : And to such Assurance (according to the Doctrine of particular Redemption) it is certain that very few Men, especially of the best Men, can arrive ; it is a Question whether any Men arrive thereto.

Apoc. 5. 9.
Eph. 1. 6.
Col. 1. 12.

According to the Sense of all Men, it is also no easy Thing to know certainly, whether a Man at present be in the State of Grace : And he that doth not know that, cannot (except upon the Score of general Redemption) be assured that he is redeemed ; and therefore cannot thank God.

It hath been the common Doctrine of *Christendom* for fifteen hundred Years together, that no Man (without a special Revelation) can in this Life be assured of his perseverance, and consequently not of his Salvation ; and consequently not of his Election or Redemption, in Case only they who are saved are in the Design of God redeemed : No Man therefore without that special Revelation, can thank God heartily for his Redemption, as being uncertain thereof, it being a Secret reserved in God's Breast.

It is yet a farther Difficulty, supposing a Man to have a good Assurance of his present State, to be assured of his final Perseverance in it : Which he that hath not, cannot (except upon the said Score) thank God for it.

The best Men especially, who out of Modesty and Humility, are apt to doubt of their present State ; who studying their Hearts, and discovering many Imperfections in themselves, who reflecting on their Lives, and observing in them many Defects, are apt to question whether they are qualified for God's Favour, or fitted for the future Account and Enjoyment of Heaven, who considering the treachery of their Hearts, the feebleness of their Reason, that unsteadiness of their Resolution, will be apt to fear they may fall away, will be render'd hence incapable to give God thanks for their Redemption : Only the bold and blind Bayards (who usually out of Self-conceit are so exceedingly confident of their Election and Salvation) will be able to praise God for it.

Hence the Assurance of Salvation happening to few, and of them to much fewer upon good grounds ; it being necessary to none, it being perhaps (yet far more probably, according to the general Sense of *Christendom*) groundless to any ; few or none are capable to render God Praise and Thanks for it : So shall he lose in effect all Thanks for the greatest Benefit he did ever confer on Mankind.

It is therefore a dangerous Opinion, which checketh their Gratitude, which stoppeth their Mouths from praising God ; which so depriveth God of his due Praise. It is much more safe to praise God for the Benefits we conceive we have, but have not, than to neglect to praise him, for that we have.

3. This Doctrine doth afford great Matter of Comfort : If a Man reflecting on his own Heart and Ways (observing in them many Blemishes and Defects) is apt to be discouraged, yet it will raise him to consider, that he is not thereby excluded from a Possibility of Salvation, seeing he is assured of God's favourable Inclination, and who hath expressed so much good-Will and Favour toward him in his Redemption ; seeing he is persuaded, that he hath a Saviour so kindly and piti-

fully affected toward him ; who wisheth him well ; who is concerned in his Salvation, that he might not be crossed or defeated in his Designs, that he might not lose the Effects of his Endeavours, the Price of his Blood. But he that seeth himself in so doubtful a Condition, as to his own Qualifications, and withal hath no Assurance that God was ever graciously disposed toward him, cannot but thereby be much discouraged.

This Doctrine therefore is safe and useful, it can do no Man harm, it may do him great good by giving him hopes of being assisted and accepted of his Redeemer. But the other is dangerous, as tending to discourage and deject Men.

4. This Doctrine is a great incitement to the performance of Duty ; both as working upon Men's Ingenuity, and disposing them in Gratitude to serve God, from the resentment of their Obligation for so great a Favour ; and as assuring them of acceptance in case of endeavour to obey. How can he but be moved willingly to serve God, who hath an apprehension of God's such merciful Design to save him ? Of his having done so much in order thereto ?

But how can he be moved to serve God in consideration of such a Benefit, who is ignorant of its being intended him ? How can any Man apply himself cheerfully to serve that Master, whose favourable Inclination toward him, whose Readiness to accept his Service he doubteth of.

^{1 Cor. 6. 20.} ^{1 Pet. 1. 17.} The *Apostles* propound it as a Ground of Gratitude, and an Obligation to the Performance of Duty, that they are redeemed by Christ ; which supposeth they do all know and believe it.

Supposing Christ is not the Redeemer of all but of those only, who shall be finally saved, these grounds of Thankfulness and enforcements of Duty cannot properly or pertinently respect all Christians, and indeed only those who are sure of their Salvation.

My thanking Christ for his redeeming me, my diligently serving him as my Redeemer, supposeth my Opinion, and is grounded upon the Truth of his being really so : — I cannot heartily, confidently or comfortably do it, except I know it, and am assured thereof : Which I cannot do except Christ died for all Men, or that I am assured of my particular Election.

So that either CHRIST is an universal Saviour, or the greatest Part of Christians are disobliged and incapacitated reasonably to thank him, to praise him, to serve him, as they are enjoined to do.

5. It is a great Aggravation of Infidelity, of Apostasy, of all Disobedience, that we are guilty of them, do frustrate the Designs and Undertakings of Christ, do reject the Overtures of his Grace, do abuse the Goodness and Mercy of their Redeemer ; it consequently deterreth from those Things.

^{Luke 7. 30.} The *Pharisees and Lawyers rejected the Counsel of God toward them* (God therefore designed their good.)

^{Heb. 2. 3.} How shall we escape that neglect so great Salvation ? A Salvation which they were capable of, which was designed for them, which was offered to them ; otherwise there would have been no Danger in neglecting it, no Fault in doing it.

^{Acts 13. 26.} ^{46.} It is said of the *Jews at Antioch in Pisidia*, that they did, ἀπωσείδοντες, thrust away the Gospel (the word of Salvation, that was sent them) judging themselves unworthy of eternal Life : God did think fit out of Goodness seriously to offer it to them, but they did not think fit to embrace it.

^{2 Pet. 3. 9.} ^{Rom. 2. 23.} Despise thou the riches of God's goodness ? How can any Man despise that which doth not concern him, which never was offered him, which at least he hath no ground of Confidence, that it extendeth to him ?

^{John 5. 34. 38.} These things I speak that ye may be saved : So our Lord saith to those — who did not believe in him.

^{Matt. 23. 37.} How often have I willed ? &c.

^{2 Pet. 2. 1.} Denying the Lord that bought them.

6. It is a great encouragement and excitement to Devotion. Who can be backward of having recourse to his Redeemer ; or of using his Mediation ? Whom will not such an Experiment of Goodness invite and encourage ?

But the contrary Apprehension must needs damp Devotion, and discourage from it. He can apply himself to God but faintly, and distrustfully, who distrusteth whether he hath any Redeemer or Mediatour or no. Who must thus conceive and say to himself : Perhaps God hath loved me, and perhaps he never had nor will

will have any regard to my Wellfare. Perhaps *Christ* died with intention to do me good, perhaps he never did mean any such thing : Perhaps those Expressions of kindness founding so generally do not include me, perhaps I am excluded, and only deluded by them. When a Man cannot say to *Christ*, O my Saviour !—— O my Mediatour ! &c. nor see his Intercession with God for the Procurement of Faith, of Grace, of any good Thing.

7. It is a ground and motive of Charity ; there arising thence a more considerable relation between all Men ; being all the Objects of *Christ's* Love and Mercy, should endear Men to one another ; it rendereth every Man valuable in our Eyes, as dear and precious in God's sight. It should make his Salvation desirable to us.

Pray for all Men, saith *St. Paul*.

The contrary Opinion removeth this ground of Charity ; and so cooleth it.

8. It should consequently render us careful to promote the Salvation of others, and fearful to hinder it by ill Example, by ill Doctrine, by any Misbehaviour. So doth *St. Paul* argue, when he saith, *Destroyest thou him for whom Christ died ?*

9. It is a Piece of Justice to acknowledge the Right and Interest of every Man in his Saviour.

A Wrong to exclude any ; to confine and appropriate this great Blessing ; to engross, to enclose a Common ; to restrain that by forging Distinctions, which is so unlimitedly expressed.

The Undertakings and Performances of our Saviour did respect all Men as the common Works of Nature do ; as the Air we breath in, as the Sun which shineth on us ; the which are not given to any Man particularly, but to all generally ; not as a proper Inclosure, but as a Common——they are indeed mine, but not otherwise than as they do belong to all Men.

A Gift they are to all equally, though they do not prove to all a Blessing ; there being no common Gift, which by the Refusal, Neglect, or ill Use of it may not prove a Curse——*a Saviour of Death*.

SERMON XLIII.

The NATIVITY of our LORD, Tidings of great Joy.

LUKE II. 10.

And the Angel said unto them, Fear not, for Behold, I bring you Tidings of great Joy, which shall be to all People.

Ἰδὲ δὲ εὐαγγε-
λιζόμεναι χά-
ραν μεγάλην,
ἥτις ἔσται πάν-
τι τῷ λαῷ.

THE proper Business of a *Festival* is spiritual Joy, conceived in our Hearts, by reflection on some notable Blessing conferred on us ; accompanied with a grateful Sense and Expression, answerable to the special Bounty and Mercy of God, in due proportion to the Nature and Degree of that Blessing.

Such Joy is a Duty, or a Part of religious Devotion, required by God, and very acceptable to him ; for as God would have his Servants perpetually content, well satisfied, and chearful in all States, and upon all Occurrences ; so he doth especially demand from us, that we should entertain his Favours with Delight and Complacence ; it being proper, it being seemly, it being just so to do ;

for since Joy is a natural result of our obtaining whatever we do apprehend good, or esteem and affect ; the Conception of it is a plain Argument, that we do well understand, do rightly prize, do cordially like, do thankfully embrace God's Favours ; as on the contrary, a Defect of it doth imply, that we do not mind them, or take them to be little worth, that we do not sensibly relish them, or accept them kindly. And if ever we are obliged, if ever we are concerned so to rejoyce, then surely it is now ; when the fairest Occasion, and highest Cause of Joy, that ever was, is presented to us ; when certain News from Heaven, and the best that ever came from thence, of the most admirable, the most glorious, the most beneficial Event, that ever happened in the World, is in a manner suitably rare conveyed to us ; for, *Behold, saith the Angel, I bring you Tidings of great Joy, which shall be to all People.*

Upon which *Words* (each whereof is emphatical, and pregnant with Matter observable) we shall first make a brief Descant or Paraphrase, supplying the room of a curious *Analysis* ; then we shall urge the main Duty couched in them.

Idè, Behold : This is a Word denoting *Admiration*, exciting *Attention*, intimating Assurance : *Behold*, and *admire* ; it is no mean, no ordinary Matter, that I report, but a most remarkable, a very marvellous Event : *Behold* and *attend* ; it is a Business not to be passed over with small Regard, but most worthy your Consideration, of high Moment, and Concernment, to you. *Behold*, and *see* ; 'tis no uncertain, no obscure Thing ; but that whereof you may be fully assured, as if it were most evident to your Sense, and which by conspicuous Proofs shall be demonstrated ; in the mean while you have no slight Authority for it : For

Εὐαγγελίζομαι, I bring good Tidings ; I, an *Angel*, a special Messenger of God purposely sent on this Errand, that by the Strangeness of my Apparition I may excite you to regard it, by the Weight of my Testimony I may incline you to believe it ; by the Dignity of my Nature I may declare the Importance of it : I, a faithful Servant of God, and a kind Friend to Men, very willing at his Command to perform good Offices to them, do bring a Message, well becoming an Angel's Mouth, worth my Descent from Heaven, and putting on this visible Shape : For *I bring*

Εὐαγγελίζομαι χαρὰν μεγάλην, good Tidings of great Joy : I bring *Tidings*, that may gratify the Curiosity of any Man, the Mind of Man naturally being greedy of News ; *good Tidings*, those are welcome to all Men, and apt to yield more Pleasure, than any Knowledge we had before : *Tidings of Joy* ; such as may not only minister a dry Satisfaction to your Reason, but sensibly touch your Affections, by the comfortable Nature, and beneficial Tendency of them : *Tidings of great Joy* ; as not touching any indifferent or petty Business, but Affairs of nearest Concernment, and highest Consequence to you : (such indeed, as you shall understand, which do concern not the poor Interests of this World, not the sorry Pleasures of Sense, not any slender Advantage of your present Life, and temporal State ; but your spiritual Welfare, your everlasting Condition, the future Joy and Happiness of your Souls) *Tidings* indeed the most gladsome that ever sounded upon Earth, that ever entered into Mortal Ear : These *I bring*

*Pauperibus at-
que vigilantibus,
Sc. Bern.
de Nat. Serm.*

*5.
Luke 2. 8.*

ὑμῖν, to you : to you *shepherds* ; Persons of mean Condition, and simple Capacity, leading this innocent and humble sort of Life, employed in your honest Vocation, undergoing toilsome Labour, and sore Hardship ; witness the open Field, witness the cold Season, witness the dark Night in which I find you watching, and guarding your Sheep ; to you, who could expect no very welcome Tidings ; who are little concerned in any great Transactions ; and can have small Ambition or Hope of bettering your Condition by any Changes here ; even to you (not in the first Place to the mighty *Princes*, to the crafty *Statesman*, to the sage *Philosophers*, or learned *Rabbies*, to the wealthy *Merchants*, or fine *Citizens*, who now are warm in their Houses, enjoying their Ease and Pleasure ; reposing on their Beds, or sitting by their Fires, or revelling at their Banquets and Sports ; but to you) poor, harmless, silly, industrious Souls ; who well may represent the greater and better Part of Mankind, in this surprizing and absolute free Way, the gracious Lord of Heaven by me his special Minister doth vouchsafe to send from thence *Tidings of great joy* : Which shall be

Παντὶ τῷ λαῷ, *to all people*; or rather to all *the people*; that is to God's ancient and peculiar People, in regard to which it is said, *I was not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel*; to that People I say especially, primarily, and more immediately this Joy did appertain; it by a closer Relation to God, and special Interest in his Promises having plainest Title thereto; it from anticipations of Knowledge, Faith and Hope, being more capable to admit such an Overture; it indeed being the Representative of all the spiritual *Israel*, or faithful Seed of *Abraham*, for whom the Benefits which these Tidings import were designed; to it first indeed, but mediately and consequentially to all People dispersed on the Face of the Earth: The Expression seemeth adapted to the present Conceits of that Nation, which apprehended nothing about God's favourable Intentions to the Community of Men; but in effect it is to be understood extensively in reference to all People: For the Saviour, the *Christ*, the *Lord*, of whom this good News did report, was not only to be the Redeemer, and Governour of that small People, but of the World, of every Nation, of all Mankind: Here indeed we have *παντὶ τῷ λαῷ*, *to all the people*; but in the *nunc dimittis* of old *Simeon*, we have *πάντων τῶν λαῶν*, *of all the peoples*; *Mine eyes* (said he) *have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of the peoples*: As he was the glory of his people *Israel*; as in him God did visit and redeem that his people; so he was made a light to lighten the Gentiles, and to be for salvation to the uttermost ends of the earth; He was the expectation of *Israel*; but he was likewise the desire of all nations; He was destin'd to rule in *Sion*; but the Heathen also were given for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession; He was the root of *Jesse*, which should stand for an ensign of the people, to which the Gentiles should seek; He was that Royal person, of whom the Psalmist did sing, *Men shall be blessed in him, all nations shall call him blessed*.

He was to be born by Nation a *Jew*, but a Man by Nature; the Son of man, was a *Stile* which he commonly did own, and affect no less than the Son of *Abraham*, or of *David*; he was *born* indeed under the law, but of a woman; and therefore brother to us all, as partaker of the same flesh and blood; Hence was he endued with an human Compassion, and with a fraternal Affection toward all Men; hence was he disposed to extend the Benefit of his charitable and gracious Performances unto them all.

Judaea therefore must not engross this angelical Gospel; it is of Importance most universal and unlimited, reaching through all successions of Time, and all extensions of Place; filling all Ages and Regions of the World, with matter, and with obligation of Joy: Hence even by *Moses* antiently (according to St. Paul's Interpretation) were all Nations upon this Account invited to a common Joy; *Rejoice*, said he, *O ye nations with his people*. Hence, in foresight of this event, the Holy Psalmist (as the Fathers expound him) did sing, *The Lord reigneth, let the earth rejoice, let the multitude of Isles be glad thereof*: Hence Sing, *O thou barren, thou that didst not bear, break forth into singing and cry aloud, thou that didst not travel with child*---*The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose*---*Sing unto the Lord a new song, and his praise from the end of the earth*, said the Evangelical Prophet in regard to this dispensation; In fine, this Angel himself did interpret his own Words, when in consort with the heavenly Choir he sang that Anthem, *Glory be to God in the highest; on earth peace, and good-will toward men*; whence we may collect that a Peace diffused over the Earth, and a Good-will extended toward all Men were implied in these tidings of great joy to all people.

We then are all concerned in these Tidings, and we may look on them as by this heavenly Evangelist imparted to us; whence our Duty must be to listen with reverent Attention unto them, seriously to weigh the Purport of them, diligently to contemplate the Reasons of that great Joy, which effectually should be produced in us by them, as their proper and due result; to further which Practice, let us take some Prospect of this Gospel, whereby it may appear pleasant and apt to kindle a sprightly Joy in our Hearts. The Matter of it, is the *Nativity* of our ever blessed Lord, and Saviour *Jesus Christ*; for, *To you*, saith our Angel, *is born this day a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord*, an Occurrence fraught with all the greatest Causes of Joy imaginable; as importing innumerable, unexpressibly and unconceivably vast Advantages thence springing to us.

It doth minister occasion of Rejoycing for all the Blessings which did flow from each of his salutary Undertakings and Performances; for all the Mercies purchased by the Merits of his Obedience, and by the Price of his Blood; for all the Graces issuing from his dispensation of the *Holy Spirit*; for all the Benefits consequent on his illustrious Resurrection, Ascension and Glorification; as being a good Entrance to them, yea, a great Progress in them, and a certain Pledge of their full Accomplishment; for all the Work of our Redemption was in a manner atchieved, when our Saviour did appear; his Incarnation was the great Step toward it; as being an Act of the humblest Obedience, and of the highest Merit, that could anywise be performed, for satisfying the Justice of God, and winning his Favour toward us: His *taking up life* may well seem more meritorious, than his *laying it down*, and the chief Passion which he could ever undergo; His Death was a Passion, great as Death could be; His Life also was a continual Passion, or Exercise of huge Patience; but his Birth seemeth to be the greatest and strangest Passion of all; involving the lowest Submission, and the deepest Suffering: What nobler Sacrifice could there be, than God's offering himself up to Mortality, to Infirmary, to Slavery? What Obedience can be thought of comparable to that which he did express when he said, *Lo I come to do thy will, O God: I came down, not that I might do my own will, but the will of him that sent me.* For him to descend from Heaven, the Region of Light and Bliss, into this gloomy and sad World, for him in a manner to devest himself of celestial Majesty, and to assume the Form of a Servant; for him to be enclosed in a Womb, and to come out wailing thence, to suck at a Breast for Life, to be carried in Arms, and laid in a Manger; to enter on a Stage of Being so very low and homely; for him, I say, *the Lord of Glory*, thus to empty, and abase himself, may not this reasonably be deemed more than after his becoming Man to sustain all the Grievances incident to our Nature and State? Whence *the very assumption of flesh was* (saith St. Athanasius) *the redemption of all mankind*: He was at least thence engaged in the Way of acting and suffering what-ever was needful for our Recovery; and having gone so far, assuredly he never would flinch or recoil, but would go through with all; being come, he would shew himself come to purpose, leaving no Part unfinished of his grand Design.

Heb. 10. 7.
John 6. 38.

Phil. 2. 7, 8.

Ἐαυτὸν ἐκένωσεν, ἑαυτὸν ὑπαπαύνωσεν.

Ἡ προσληψὶς τῆ σαρκὸς ἐλευθέρωσις ἢ πάσης τῆ ἀνθρωπότητος. Ath. Or. 3. c. Art. p. 385. vid. p. 618.

Δύχλον ἦν τὸ ἐαυτὸ σάρεα, &c. Greg. Naz. Or. 38.

Creatoris ad creaturam descensio credentium est ad aeterna provectio. Leo M. de Nat. Serm. 5.

Οὐκ ἔν τῷ τῷ Πατρὶ καὶ λατῶν περὶ τὴν ἡμέραν ἐν τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ μέ-
Greg. Nyss.

Greg. Nyss.

Tom. 2. p. 784.

πάντα ταῦτα τῇ χάριτι ἡμετέρας χάριτος ἔστιν αὐτῇ ὅς ἡρξεν ἡμεῖς ἀγαθῶν. All these things (saith St. Gregory Nyssen) are the grace of this present day, for it began the goods which did in order succeed.

But

But waving the numberless Benefits so consequent on the *Nativity*, we shall only touch some of those which have a more formal and close Relation thereto.

I pass over the Contemplation of that sweet Harmony between the old, and the new World; in which, to our comfortable Satisfaction, the sweetest Attributes of God (his Goodness, his Wisdom, his Fidelity and Constancy) do illustrate themselves, by Completion of the ancient Promises, Prefigurations and Predictions touching this Event.

I forbear also to reflect on the happy Alteration and Amendment of the World, which our Lord's Coming did induce, by comparing the State of Things before it, with that which followed it; the Consideration of which Case is very pleasant, and productive of Joy. *First* then,

1. Let us consider, that the *Nativity* doth import the Completion of many ancient Promises, Predictions and Prefigurations concerning it; that whereas all former Dispensations of Favour and Mercy were as Preludes or Preambles to this; the *Old Law* did aim to represent it in its mysterious Poms; the chief of providential Occurrences did intimate it; the Prophets often in their mystical Raptures did allude to it, and often in clear Terms did express it; the gracious Designs of God, and the longing Expectations of Mankind being so variously implied in regard thereto; now all is come to be fulfilled, and perfected in most clear, most effectual, most substantial Accomplishment: Now is sprung up that *seed of the woman*, which according to the first Gospel preached to *Abraham*, should *bruise the serpents head*; Now is the mystical *Isaac*, the miraculous *Son of promise* born; Now is that grant to *Abraham*, *In thy seed shall all nations of the earth be blessed*, made good; Now is *Shiloh* come, of whom *Jacob* foreboded, *unto him the gatherings of the people shall be*; Now is that Oracle of *Moses* more than verified, *A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like to me, him shall ye hear*; Now the star is come out of *Jacob*, the Vision whereof dazzled *Balaam*, and stopped him from cursing that People, in which it should arise; Now is that Oath discharged, to *David*, *Of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne*; Now those illustrious Predictions of *Isaiah*, *There shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse*----- *A Virgin shall conceive and bear a son; to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government shall be on his shoulders*; *There shall come out of Zion the deliverer, and shall turn ungodliness from Jacob*, are fully accomplished: Now the righteous branch (of which *Jeremy* and *Zachary* spake) is sprouted forth; And *Ezekiel's One Shepherd*, *Daniel's Son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven*; *Micaiah's Ruler in Israel, whose goings forth have been from old*; *Haggai's Desire of all nations*; *Malachi's Angel of the Covenant, and Son of Righteousness* have all in truth appeared: Now is that glorious King and Captain arrived, whom the holy Oracles do so magnificently describe; whom *Moses* and *Joshua*, whom *David* and *Solomon* in so many pat Circumstances did foreshadow; whom God would set upon his holy hill of *Sion*; *The scepter of whose Kingdom is a mighty scepter*; who should raise the tabernacle of *David* that is fallen; before whom all Kings should fall down, and whom all nations should serve; who should reign over the house of *Jacob* for ever, and of whose Kingdom there shall be no end.

Now what can be more delightful, or satisfactory to our Mind, than to reflect on this sweet Harmony of Things, this goodly Correspondence between the old and new World; wherein so pregnant Evidences of God's chief Attributes (of his Goodness, of his Wisdom, of his Fidelity and Constancy) all conspiring to our Benefit do shine? Is it not pleasant to contemplate how provident God hath ever been for our Welfare? What Trains from the World's beginning, or ever since our unhappy fall he hath been laying to repair and restore us? How wisely he hath ordered all Dispensations with a convenient reference and tendency to this Masterpiece of Grace? How steady he hath been in prosecuting his Designs, and how faithful in accomplishing his Promises concerning it?

If the holy Patriarchs did see this Day, and were glad; if a Glimpse thereof did cause their Hearts * to leap within them; if its very dawn had on the Spirits of the Prophets so vigorous an Influence; what Comfort and Complacency should we feel in this its real Presence, and bright Aspect on us? How sensibly should we be

Sapientia & benignitas Dei ac salutaris operis mora capiores nos suae vocationis effecit, ut quod multis signis, multis vocibus, multisque mysteriis per tot fuerat secula pronuntiandum, in his diebus Evangelii non esset ambiguum, &c.
Leo P. de Nat. Serm. 3.

Non itaque novo consilio Deus rebus humanis, nec serâ miseratione consuluit, sed à constitutione mundi unam eandemque omnibus causam salutis instituit. Leo P. de Nat. Serm. 3.

* ὕμνωσαν.
Magnam enim jucunditatem tunc carpebant ipsi Sancti Prophetæ, cum ea videbant in Spiritu, non jam impleta, sed adhuc futura—Aug. in Pl. 96.

affected

affected with this our happy Advantage above them ; the which our Lord himself then did teach us to estimate duly, when he said, *Blessed are your Eyes, for they see ; and your Ears, for they hear ; for verily I say unto you, that many Prophets and righteous Men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them ; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them.*

2. Let us consider what Alteration our Lord's coming did induce, by comparing the State of Things before it to that which followed it. The old World then consisting of two Parts, severed by a strong Wall of Partition, made up of Difference in Opinion, in Practice, in Affection, together with a strict Prohibition to one of holding intercourse with the other.

Of one, and that far the greater Part, St. Paul hath given us these Descriptions and Characters ; *They were aliens from the Commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the Covenant, having no hope, and being without God in the World ; They were by nature the Children of Wrath, and of Disobedience ; They were dead in trespasses and sins, walking according to the course of this World, according to the Prince of the power of the Air, the Spirit that worketh in the children of Disobedience ; They did walk in the vanity of their Mind, having their Understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, through the Ignorance that was in them, because of the blindness of their heart ; and being past feeling, did give themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness ; They had their Conversation in the lusts of the flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh, and of the mind ; being foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another : Such was the Case (the dismally wretched Case) of the Gentile World ; such were our Forefathers (such after them of course, by fatal Consequence, should we have been) They were in their Minds blinded with gross Ignorance, and deluded with foul Errors ; they were in their Wills and Affections corrupted with great Disorder, Perverseness, Sensuality, Malice ; they did in their Conversation practice all Sorts of Impiety, Iniquity and Impurity ; their Conceptions of God were very unworthy, and their Worship answerably such (full of sottish, savage, beastly Superstitions) their Principles were vain, and their Life conformably dissolute ; in short, they lived under the*

Tit. 3. 3. Col. 3. 7.
(Eph. 5. 8. Col. 2. 13.)
1 Cor. 6. 11. 2 Cor. 4. 4.
1 Thess. 4. 5. 1 Pet. 4. 3.
Gal. 4. 8. Rom. 1. 29.)

Eph. 6. 12. 2. 2.
(John 12. 31. 14. 30. 16. 11.)
2 Cor. 4. 4. 2 Tim. 2. 16.
Col. 1. 13. 2. 15. Acts 26. 18.)

Διαλογισμοῖς.
Rom. 1. 21-28.

became vain in their reasonings, and their foolish Heart was darkened ; professing themselves wise, they became fools ; And as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate Mind, to do those things which are not convenient.

As for the other Part, or little Parcel of Men, the Condition of that was also very low ; if the rest of the World did lie in dark Night, they did live but in a dusky Twilight ; their Religion was much wrapt up in Shadow and Mystery ; they had but dilute *Idea's* of God's Nature, and scant Discoveries of his Will ; their Law or Rule of Practice, in divers respects was defective and infirm ; they were lock'd under the Discipline of childish Rudiments, suiting their raw Capacities, and under the Bondage of slavish Yokes besitting their stubborn Dispositions ; which Defailances in Notion their Practice commonly did out-strip ; being fond, corrupt, hypocritical, void of interiour, substantial and genuine Righteousness ;

as the old *Prophets* did often complain, and as our Lord, with his *Apostles*, did urge.

Such was the State of the World in its Parts, and jointly of the whole it may be said, that it was *shut up under Sin* and Guilt; under Darknes and Weakness, under Death and Corruption, under Sorrow and Woe: That no full Declaration of God's Pleasure, no clear Overture of Mercy, no express Grant of spiritual Aid, no certain Redemption from the Filth, or the Force of Sin, from the Stroke of Death, from due Punishment hereafter; no Encouragements suitable to high Devotion, or strict Virtue, were any-wise in a solemn way exhibited or dispensed before our Lord's Appearance: So that well might all Men be then represented as *Cimmerians*, *sitting in Darknes, in the region and shadow of Death*; well may we suppose all Ages foregoing to have teemed with hope, and desire of this happy Day; or that (as St. Paul saith) *the whole Creation* (that is, all Mankind) *groaneth together, and travellet together until now*; as labouring with Pangs of implicit Desire, or under a painful Sense of needing a Saviour; well might *Esay* thus proclaim his coming; *Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee; for behold Darknes shall cover the Land, and gross Darknes the People; but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his Glory shall be seen upon thee, and the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and Kings to the brightness of thy rising*: For, Now, the Lord hath made known his Salvation, his Righteousness hath he openly shewed in the sight of the heathen; The Lord hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the Nations, and all the ends of the Earth do see the Salvation of our God.

Now we are all Children of the Light, and of the Day; all do know God from the least to the greatest; the rarest, the deepest Notions are grown common and obvious; every Child is instructed in the highest Truths, every Peasant is become a great Philosopher (beyond *Aristotle* or *Plato*, or *Epicetus*) skilful of the best Knowledge, able to direct his Life in the best way, capable of obtaining the best good.

Now the Spirit of God (the Spirit of Direction, of Succour, of Comfort spiritual) is poured upon all Flesh. Now the Grace of God, that bringeth Salvation, hath appeared to all Men; fully instructing them in their Duty, and strongly enabling them to perform it, freely offering them Mercy, mightily encouraging them with hopes of most blessed Rewards.

Now Jew and Gentile are re-united and compacted in one Body; walking in the same Light, and under Obligation to the same Laws; sharing in a common Redemption and Inheritance; being inseparably linked together with the Bands of Faith, of Charity, of spiritual Fraternity; thus old Things are passed away, behold all Things are become new, in Virtue and Consequence of our Lord's appearance: In Contemplation of which so great, so general, so happy a Change, how can we forbear to rejoyce?

But farther, that we may yet more nearly touch the Point:

3. Let us consider that the Nativity of our Lord is a grand Instance, a pregnant Evidence, a rich Earnest of Almighty God's very great Affection and Benignity toward Mankind; For, *In this* (saith St. John) *the love of God was manifested, that God sent his only begotten Son into the world*; and, *Through the tender mercies of our God* (sang old Zachary) *the day spring from on high did visit us*: This indeed is the peculiar Experiment, wherein that most divine Attribute did shew and signalize it self. The Power of God doth brightly shine in the Creation, the Wisdom of God may clearly be discerned in the Government of Things; but the Incarnation of God is that work, is that dispensation of Grace, wherein the divine Goodness doth most conspicuously display it self: How indeed possibly could God have demonstrated a greater excess of Kindness toward us, than by thus for our sake and good sending his dearest Son out of his Bosom into this sordid and servile Estate, subjecting him to all the Infirmities of our frail Nature, exposing him to the worst Inconveniencies of our low Condition? What Expressions can signify, what Comparisons can set out the stupendous vastness of this Kindness? If we should imagine, that a great Prince should put his only Son (a Son most lovely, and worthily most beloved) into Rags, should dismiss him from his

Apparuerat ante potentia in rerum creatione, apparebat sapientia in earum gubernatione, sed benignitas misericordiae nunc maxime apparuit in humanitate. Bern. de Nat. Serm. 1.

Semper quidem diversis modis, multisque mensuris humano generi bonitas divina consulit, & plurima providentiae sua munera omnibus retro seculis clementer impartit; sed in novissimis temporibus omnem abundantiam solita benignitatis excessit; quando in Christo ipsa ad peccatores misericordia, ipsa ad errantes veritas, ipsa ad mortuos vita descendit. Sc. P. Leo M. de Nat. Serm. 4.

(Psalm. 36. 6. 108. 4.)

Court, should yield him up into the hardest Slavery, merely to the intent that he thereby might redeem from Captivity the meanest and basest of his Subjects, how faint a resemblance would this be of that immense Goodness, of that incomparable Mercy, which in this instance the King of all the World hath declared toward us his poor Vassals, his indeed unworthy Rebels.

And what greater Reason of Joy can there be, than such an Assurance of his Love, on whose Love all our Good dependeth, in whose Love all our Felicity consisteth? What can be more delightful than to view the Face of our Almighty Lord so graciously smiling upon us?

Should we not be extremely glad, should we not be proud, if our earthly Prince by any singular Mark would express himself kindly affected to us? How much more should we resent such a Testimony of God's Favour; how worthily may our Souls be transported with a Sense of such Affection.

4. We may consider our Lord's Nativity, as not only expressing simple Good-will, but implying a perfect Reconciliation, a firm Peace, a steady Friendship established between God and us; or that it did not only proceed from Love, but did also produce Love to us. We did stand at a great Distance, in estrangement, yea in enmity toward God; our first Parents had by presumptuous Disobedience revolted from him; and we insisting on the Footsteps of their Apostasy continued in defiance of him; *all men had sinned, and fallen short of the glory of God; There was not a righteous man upon earth that did good, and sinned not*; whence unavoidably the Wrath of the most holy God was incensed, the Justice of the most righteous Lord was enraged against us; thence did issue a sad Doom, thence a just Sentence of capital Punishment was denounced on us; on pretence of Favour, no over-

Rom. 3. 24. Ἀδύνατον γένοιτο τῇ φύσει λογικῇ ἕσθαι, ἢ ἐκκοίως ἀμαρτησάσης, ἢ ὑπὸ καταδίκην θανάτου γινόμενῃ ἑαυτὴν ἀνακαλέσασθαι εἰς ἐλευθερίαν. Ath. p. 638.

Gal. 3. 22. Ἀδύνατον ἑτέρως τοῦ καθεσθῆναι τὴν ἀνθρωπίνην ἐν τῇ φύσει πνεύματος ἁγίου δεῖν χεῖρας, εἰ μὴ διὸς ἐν σαρκὶ πεισθέντος ἡμῶν, ὃ τὴν ἀνάμνησιν διχαροῦντος εἰς νόμον ἀσώτων, &c. Ath. de Incarn. Verbi.

Eph. 2. 15, 16.

Rom. 8. 3. 2 Cor. 5. 19.

Τὸ τῷ Ἀδὰμ συμπύωμα εἰς ἀσύγκλητον ἀνάστημα χεῖρας ἀνετίσταντο, ἐν ὁμοῦματι σαρκὸς ἀμαρτίας ἀφθίς, ἢ κατακείμενος τὴν ἀμαρτίαν ἐν τῇ σαρκί. Ath. p. 620.

Εἰ δὲ μὴ ἐν τῇ ἀμαρτησάσῃ φύσιν ἡ ἀναμνηστικὴ ὥφθιν, πῶς κατεκείνη ἡ ἀμαρτία ἐν τῇ σαρκί; Id. p. 368.

(1 Pet. 1. 19. Heb. 7. 26.)

John 14. 30. — ἐν ἐμοὶ ἐκ ἑχθρῶν ἐγέν.

John 19. 6. — ἐκ ἐλευθερίας ἐν αὐτῷ αἰτῶν.

Matt. 3. 17. 1 Tim. 3. 16.

Jer. 23. 6. 33. 16.

Shall Heaven and Earth retain Enmity, which have so kindly embraced, and kissed each other; since *Truth hath sprouted from the earth, and righteousness hath looked down from heaven*? Shall the War go on, when the great Mediatour and Umpire of Peace is come: *preaching peace to them that are afar off, and to them that are near*? Can Death any longer reign over us, or our Disgrace and Misery continue, now that *the Prince of life, the Lord of glory, the Captain of salvation* doth appear for our relief?

Now then what can be more worthy of Joy, than such a blessed Turn of Affairs? How can we otherwise than with exceeding Gladness solemnize such a Peace? A Peace accorded with him, who in forces so infinitely doth overmatch us; who at his Pleasure can utterly quell us; who with the greatest Ease, with less than a Word of his Mouth, can dash us to nothing, or hurl us down into an Abyss of remediless Woe; How can we avoid being extremely satisfied at the

Re-

Recovery of his Favour and Friendship, which alone can be the Foundation of our Safety and Welfare, which is the sole Fountain of all Good, of all Comfort, of all Felicity ?

5. Our Lord's Nativity doth infer a great Honour, and a high Preferment to us: No-wise indeed could Mankind be so dignified, or our Nature so advanced as hereby: No Wisdom can devise a Way beyond this, whereby God should honour his most special Favourites, or promote them to a nearness unto himself. For hence we become allied to God, in a most strait affinity, his eternal Son being made our Brother; hence as touching the Blood-royal of Heaven we do in Dignity o'er-top all the Creation; so that what the Psalmist uttered concerning Man, is verified in the most comprehensive Sense, *Thou hast crowned him with glory and honour, and hast set him over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet*: For now the Son of Man, being also the Son of God, is the Head of all principality and power, is the Lord of all things, is the Sovereign Prince of all the World; is placed far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come. That is a peculiar Honour, to which the highest Angels cannot pretend; for, *he took not the nature of Angels, but he took the seed of Abraham*; whence those noble Creatures are become in a manner inferiour to poor us; and according to just Obligation, willingly to adore our Nature; for, *when God brought his first begotten Son into the world, he said, Let all the Angels of God worship him*: Is not indeed our Flesh become adorable, as the true *Shechinah*, as the everlasting Place of the supreme Majesty, wherein the fulness of the Godhead dwelleth bodily; as the most holy Shrine of the Divinity; as the Orb of inaccessible light; as more than all this, if more could be expressed, or if we could expound that Text, *the word was made flesh, and dwelt in us*? May not our Soul worthily claim the highest respect, all whose Faculties (being endowed with unmeasurable Participations of the Holy Spirit) have been turned to a perfect Harmony with the All-wise Understanding, and the most pure Will of God? Yea, which hath been admitted into the nearest Consortship, into the strictest Union with the eternal Word; hath become an ingredient of him, who is the wisdom, and the power of God? It was a great Dignity that Man should be made according to the Image of God, but it is a more sublime Glory, that God should be made after the Image of Man, *καὶ αὐτὰ πάντα ὡμοιωθεὶς, being made like to us in all things*, bating only Sin, which is no Part of us, but an unnatural excrescence, or a deflection from our Nature: How could we be so raised up to God as by his thus stooping down to us? What can be imagined more Honourable to us, than that God should deem us worthy of such Condescension? This, this indeed is our Exaltation, that God for us should express not only so vast Charity, but so prodigious Humility.

And is it not good Matter of Joy to be thus highly graced? When are Men better pleased, than when they are preferred; then especially, when from the meanest State, *from the Dunghil, or from the Dust, they are raised to be set among Princes, and made to inherit the Throne of Glory*? Wherefore this being our Case, that we Sons of Earth, Children of Corruption, and Brethren of Worms (in Job's Stile) we Exiles of Paradise, we Heirs of Death and Misery; we, that by our Nature are the lowest of all intelligent Creatures, that by our Merits were debased beneath the Beasts that perish, that we are assumed to such Relations, that we are ennobled to such a Pitch, that our Nature hath mounted so high above all Creatures, with what Enlargement of Heart should we entertain a Dispensation so wonderful; how welcome should that Day be which doth introduce it?

6. Finally, if we survey all principal Causes of Joy, and special Exultation, we shall find them all concurring in this Event.

Is a Messenger of good News embraced with Joy? Behold the great Evangelist is come, with his Mouth full of News, most admirable, most acceptable: He, who doth acquaint us, that God is well pleased, that Man is restored, that the Adversary is cast down, that Paradise is set open, and Immortality retrieved; that Truth and Righteousness, Peace and Joy, Salvation and Happiness are descended, and come to dwell on Earth; He of whom the Prophet told, *How beautiful upon the Mount-*

Eph. 3. 10, 17.

(Hymn 100)

πᾶσι καὶ

πνεύματι, ἡμῶν

ἡ καὶ σὰν

Ath. p. 6 (2.)

Psal. 8. 3.

Heb. 2. 7.

Col. 2. 10.

Eph. 2. 22.

Acs 10. 36.

Eph. 1. 21.

Phil. 2. 9.

1 Pet. 3. 22.

Heb. 2. 17.

Heb. 1. 6.

Ἡ σὰν ἐξ ἑσθ-

λογηθῆ

Ath. p. 597.

Col. 2. 9.

Totum corpus

implet tota di-

vinitus. Leo

de Nat. Ser. 10.

John 1. 14.

3. 34.

1 Cor. 1. 24.

Qui cum origini humane multum de-
derit, quod nos ad imaginem suam fecit,
reparationi nostra longe amplius tribuit,
cum servili forma ipse se Dominus coop-
tavit. Leo de Nat. Serm. 4.

Heb. 2. 17.

our Nature: How

Exultent ergo in laudem Dei corda
credentium, & mirabilia ejus confitean-
tur filii hominum, quoniam, in hoc præ-
cipue Dei opere humilitas nostra cog-
noscit, quanti eam suus conditor æsti-
mavit. Leo Serm. 4.

Hic infirmitatis nostre suspiciens
conditionem, propter quos ad inferna
descendit eosdem in celestibus collocavit.
Leo de Nat. 5.

Psal. 113. 7, 8.

1 Sam. 2. 8.

Job 17. 14.

Psal. 39. 12.

Psal. 39. 12.

Psal. 39. 12.

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Psal. 39. 12.

Psal. 39. 12.

Psal. 39. 12.

Psal. 39. 12.

Nah. 1. 15. *tains, are the Feet of him that bringeth good Tidings ; that publisheth Peace, that*
 Rom. 10. 15. *bringeth glad Tidings of Good, that publisheth Salvation, that saith unto Sion, Thy*
 Isa. 61. 1. 2. *Message ; The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, to preach good Tidings unto the*
 Luke 4. 18. *Meek ; he hath sent me to bind up the broken hearted ; to proclaim Liberty to the*
Captives, and opening of the Prison to them that are bound ; to proclaim the accept-
able Year of the Lord, to comfort all that mourn,

Is the Birth of a Prince by honest Subjects to be commemorated with joyous
 Festivity ? Behold a PRINCE born to all the World ! a Prince undertaking to rule
 Mankind with sweetest Clemency, and exact Justice ; a Prince bringing with him
 all Peace and Prosperity ; in whose Days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell
 safely ; who shall protect us in assured Rest and Safety ; shall secure us from all
 Danger and Mischief ; shall atchieve most gallant and glorious Exploits in our Be-
 half ; shall vanquish all the Enemies of our Welfare, shall rescue us from the worst
 Slaveryes and Mischiefs ; shall settle us in a most free and happy State : He who
 bringeth Salvation from our Enemies, and from the hands of all that hate us, that
 being delivered from the hands of our Enemies, we might serve him without Fear,
 in Holiness and Righteousness before him, all the Days of our Life. Now therefore
 it is seasonable to cry out, *Allelujah, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth, let us be*
glad and rejoyce, and give Honour to him.

May Victory worthily beget Exultation ? See the invincible Warriour doth issue
 forth into the Field conquering and to conquer : He that shall baffle and rattle the
 strong one, our formidable Adversary ; that shall rout all the Forces of Hell, and
 triumph over the Powers of Darkness ; that utterly shall defeat Sin, and slay Death
 it self ; and shall subdue the World, and lay all Things prostrate at his Feet ; be-
 hold the Captain of our Salvation ; arrayed with glorious Humility, and armed
 with a mighty Patience ; See, the great Blow it struck, at which the infernal
 Powers do stagger ; the Devil's Pride and Envy are abased, all the Enemies are
 amazed, are daunted, are confounded at his Presence ; they cannot stand, they
 break, they scatter, they flee before him.

Is a Proclamation of Peace, after rueful Wars, to be solemnized with Alacrity ?
 Behold then everlasting Peace between Heaven and Earth, a general Peace among
 Men, a found Peace between each good Man and himself are settled and published ;
 the illustrious Herald, the noble Hostage of them is arrived ; the Prince of Peace
 himself doth bring all Peace unto us.

Is Satisfaction of Desire, and Hope very pleasant ? Behold the desire of all Na-
 tions, the expectation of Israel, he for whom the whole Creation groaned, is come.

Is recovery of Liberty delectable to poor Slaves and Captives ? Behold, the Re-
 deemer is come out of Sion ; the precious Ransom, sufficient to purchase the Free-
 dom of many Worlds, is laid down ; unblemished Innocence, Purity and Perfe-
 ction appearing in human Nature, have procured a Releasement for us ; have up-
 locked the Prison of Sin detaining us, have knocked off the Shackles of Guilt sorely
 pinching and galling our Consciences ; have wrested us from the Hands of those

*Nam superbia hostis antiqui non im-
 merito sibi in omnes homines jus tyran-
 nicum vindicabat nec indebito dominatu
 premebat, quos à mandato Dei sponta-
 neos in obsequium suæ voluntatis allexe-
 rat. Leo de Nativ. Serm. 2.*

Luke 4. 18. Isa. 35. 10.

proud Masters, who claimed a Right, who exercised most
 tyrannous Power over us ; He is come, that proclaimeth Li-
 berty to the Captives, and opening of the Prison to them that
 are bound ; The Time is come of which the Prophet fore-
 told — *The ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to*
Sion with Songs, and everlasting Joy upon their Heads ; they
shall obtain joy and gladness ; and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

Is an Overture of Health acceptable to sick and languishing Persons ? Behold
 the great Physician, endued with admirable Skill, and furnished with infallible
 Remedies, is come, to cure us of our Maladies, and ease us of our Pains ; to bind
 up our Wounds, and to pour in Balm (the most sovereign Balm of his own Blood)
 into them ; to free us, not only from all mortiferous Diseases, but from Mortality
 it self ; He, who was sent to bind up and heal the broken-hearted ; He, who
 himself took our Infirmities, and bare our Sicknesses ; He, of whom the Prophet (in
 relation to corporal, and much more to spiritual Infirmities) did foretel ; —
Go I will come and save you ; then the Eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the
Ears of the deaf shall be unstopped ; then shall the lame Man leap as a Hart, and the
Tongue

Tongue of the dumb shall sing ; He whose Art no Disease can resist, who is able to cure our most desperate, our most inveterate Distempers ; to heal the Corruption and Impotency of our Nature, to avoid the Ignorances and Errors of our Understanding, to correct the Stupidity of our Hearts, the Perverseness of our Wills, the Disorder of our Affections ; to mitigate our Anguish of Conscience, and cleanse our Sores of Guilt ; by various efficacious Medicines, by the wholesome Instructions of his Doctrine, by the powerful Inspirations of his Grace, by the refreshing Comforts of his Spirit, by the salutary Virtue of his Merits and Sufferings.

Is Mirth seasonable on the Day of Marriage ? Behold the greatest Wedding that ever was, is this Day solemnized : Heaven and Earth are contracted ; Divinity is espoused to Humanity ; a sacred, an indissoluble Knot is tied between God and Man, *The Bridegroom is come forth out of his Chamber (Verbum Dei de utero Virginali)* clad in his nuptial Garment of Flesh, and ready to wed the Church his beloved Spouse ; *Let us therefore be glad and rejoice ; for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his Wife hath made her self ready.*

Is the Access of a good Friend to be received with cheerful Gratulation ? Behold the dearest and best Friend of all Mankind (most able, most willing, most ready to perform all good Offices ; to impart wholesome Advice, needful Aid, sweet Converse, and seasonable Consolation) is arrived to visit us, to sojourn with us, to dwell with us for ever.

Is opportune Relief grateful to Persons in a forlorn Condition, pinched with extreme Want, or plunged in any hard Distress ? Behold, a merciful, a bountiful, a mighty Saviour and Succourer, undertaking to comfort all that mourn ; inviting all such to receive from him a plentiful Supply for their Needs, a comfortable Ease in their Pressures, a happy Riddance from their Calamities ; who crieth aloud, *If any one thirsteth, let him come to me and drink ; Come to me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*

Is the Sun-rising comfortable, after a tedious, darksome and cold Night ? See, the Sun of righteousness is risen with healing in his Wings, dispensing all about his pleasant Rays, and kindly Influences : *The Day spring from on high hath visited us ;* diffusing an universal Light upon the Souls of Men, whereby the Night of Ignorance is dispelled, the Spectres of Error are vanished, the Mists of Doubt are scattered ; whereby we clearly and assuredly discern all Truths of Importance to us, and worthy of our Knowledge ; concerning the Nature and Attributes, the Works and Providence, the Will and Pleasure of God ; concerning our Selves, our Natural and Original, our Duty and Interest, our future State, and final Doom : *Our Light is come, and the Glory of the Lord is risen upon us ; the Light of the World, the true Light, enlightning every Man ; by whose Lustre all Flesh may see the Salvation of God, and which guideth our Feet in the way of Peace, doth visibly shine forth upon us.*

Never indeed did Heaven with so fair and serene a Countenance smile upon Earth, as then it did, when (this ἀστὴρ λαμπρὸς ὡς ὁ ὄρθρινός,) *bright and Morning-star* did spring above our Horizon, bringing this goodly Day ; and with it shedding Life and Cheer among us.

From this auspicious Day, did commence the Revocation of that fatal Curse, by which we were expelled from Paradise, adjudged to Death, and committed to Hell ; from thence we became re-instated in a Condition of Hope, and in a fair Capacity of Happiness ; from thence is to be dated a return of Joy into this Region of Disconsolateness. In this Nativity Mankind was born, or did revive from manifold Deaths ; from a Legal, a Moral, a Natural, an eternal Death ; from lying dead in irreparable Guilt, and under an insuperable Power of Sin ; from having our Bodies irrecoverably dissolved by Corruption, and our Souls immersed into that second more ghastly Death of perpetual incurable Anguish.

It is in effect therefore the Birth-day of the World ; the beginning of a new, better, eternal Life to Men (offered to all, and effectually bestowed on those who will embrace it) which we now do celebrate : All Reason therefore we have to rejoice most heartily, and most abundantly ; As the Goods thence accruing to us are in Multitude innumerable, in Quality

In natali Domini quasi in nuptiis spiritualibus sponsa suae Ecclesiae Christus adjunctus est—tunc processit sponsus de thalamo suo, hoc est, verbum Dei de utero virginali. Aug. de temp. Serm. 2.

Ἡ παρὰς ἐν ᾧ ὁ λόγος ἐνωμένης αὐτῷ τῇ σαρκί. Procl. in Eph. p. 1.
Joel 2. 16.

Apoc. 19. 7.

Exeget.
John 7. 37.
Isa. 55. 1.

44. 3.

Matt. 11. 28.

Mal. 4. 2.

Luke 1. 78. 79.

Isa. 60. 1.

John 8. 12.

9. 5. 1. 9.

Luke 1. 6.

78, 79.

Apoc. 22. 26.

It is the Birth-day of the Church. *Generatio enim Christi origo est populi Christiani, et natalis capitis natalis est corporis. P. Leo de Nat. Serm. 6.*
Sicut cum Christo in passione crucifixi, in resurrectione resurrecti, in ascensione ad dextram Patris collocati, ita cum ipso sumus in hac nativitate congeniti. Ibid.

insti-

ineffimable, in Duration immense; so in some Correspondence should our Joy be very intense, very effuse, very stable; The Contemplation of them should inspire somewhat of that *unspeakable Joy*, whereof St. Peter speaketh; we should be filled (according to St. Paul's Expression) *with all Joy and Peace in believing them*; we should hold fast (as the Apostle to the Hebrews adviseth) *the Confidence and rejoicing of Hope*, grounded on them, *firm to the End*.

ἡ ἀγάπη αὐτοῦ
ἡ ἀγάπη
1 Pet. 1. 8.
Rom. 15. 13.
Phil. 1. 25.
Heb. 3. 6.
Rom. 12. 12.

Having so many, so great Causes of Joy, are we not very stupid, are we not strangely cross and perverse if we neglect so pleasant a Duty?

To conclude: Of all the Days that rise upon us, this undoubtedly is the Queen, crowned by God's own Hand with sovereign Blessings; GOD hath avowed it to be the Day of his peculiar Making, and therefore of our special Rejoicing; for thus of old the inspired Psalmist did teach and exhort us to keep *Christmas, This is the Day, which the Lord hath made, let us rejoice and be glad therein*.

Psal. 118. 24.
Mat. 21. 42.
21. 9.
Acts 4. 11.
1 Pet. 2. 7.

SERMON XLIV.

The Sufferings of CHRIST foretold in the Old Testament.

ACTS III. 18.

But those things, which God before had shewed by the mouth of all his Prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled.

MANY good Arguments there are, different in kind, which conspire to persuade the Truth of our Religion; such as are the intrinsick Reasonableness, Excellency and Perfection of its Doctrine; the miraculous Works performed in Attestation thereto; the special Favour of Providence declared in the Support and Propagation thereof; but upon no other ground do the Scriptures so much build its Truth, and our Obligation to embrace it, as upon the exact Correspondence and Conformity thereof to all the ancient Scriptures, which did foreshew or foretell its Revelation and Introduction into the World; those especially which described the personal Characters, Circumstances and Performances of our Lord: To this our Lord in his Discourses and Disputes with incredulous People, referred them; *Search the Scriptures* (said he) *because in them ye expect to have eternal life* (that is, to find the true Way of saving Truth leading thereto) *and those are they which testify of me*; by this he instructed and convicted his Disciples; *beginning from Moses and from all the Prophets he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself*: and, *These* (said he to them presently before his Departure) *are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms concerning me*: This the Apostles in all their Preaching (whereby they taught, proved and persuaded, the Christian Doctrine) did chiefly insist upon; *Moses* (saith St. Peter) *truly said unto the Fathers, yea, and all the Prophets from Samuel, and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days*; and, *To him* (saith he again) *give all the Prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins*. And, of St. Paul 'tis said, that he mightily convinced the Jews-----shewing by the Scriptures, that Jesus was the

John 4. 39.

Luke 24. 27.

22. 37.

1. 70.

24. 44.

Acts 3. 22, 24.

Acts 10. 43.

13. 27, 15, 15.

24. 14.

John 1. 45.

the Christ; and --- he expounded, and testified the Kingdom of God, persuading them ^{Acts 18. 28-28. 23.} concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses, and out of the Prophets; thus the chief Apostles and Founders of our Religion in their publick Discourses; and in their Epistles, they observe the same Method; as particularly asserting Christian Doctrines and Duties by the Testimonies of Prophetical Scriptures, so generally affirming our Religion to be chiefly grounded on them; of which Salvation (saith St. Peter, concerning the Salvation exhibited by the Gospel) the Prophets did inquire, ^{1 Pet. 1. 10.} and search diligently, who prophesied of the grace to come unto you; and (in regard to the Conviction of others) he seems to prefer the Attestation of this kind before the spiritual Revelation immediately made to the Apostles; for having spoken of it, he subjoins, *καὶ ἔχομεν βεβαίωτον καὶ προφητικὸν λόγον* We have also a more sure ^{2 Pet. 1. 19.} word of Prophecy, whereunto ye do well, that ye do take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts. And, St. Paul saith, that the mystery which was kept secret since the world began, was then made ^{Rom. 16. 26, 26. 1. 2.} manifest, and by the prophetical scriptures, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations, to the obedience of faith; and, The Holy Writings (he telleth Timothy) were able to make him wise to the salvation, which is, ^{1 Tim. 3. 15.} by the faith of Jesus Christ; that is, they were able to shew, and persuade to him the Truth of Christianity, which promisseth Salvation to all that heartily embrace it, and observe its Laws.

Such a Stress was laid upon this Probation by the Founders of our Religion; and no wonder; for that is not only extremely forcible in it self, but hath some particular Uses, and some peculiar Advantages beyond others. The Fore-knowledge of future contingent Events (such as were many of those concerning our Saviour, depending upon the freest Acts of human Will) as it is for the manner of attaining it most incomprehensible to us, so it is most proper to God, and by all Men so acknowledged; future contingencies being secrets, which no Man, no Angel, no Creature can dive into, they being not discernible in their Causes, which are indeterminate; nor in themselves, who are finite. The Prediction therefore of such Events could not otherwise than proceed from his Pleasure; neither could he yield it in any way of Favour and Approbation to that, which was not perfectly true and Good: This Way therefore doth absolutely confirm the Truth and Goodness of Christian Doctrine; it withal manifests the great Worth and Weight thereof, as implying the particular Regard and Care God had of it, designing it so anciently, laying Trains of Providence toward it, and preparing such Evidences for the Confirmation thereof; it together into the Bargain maintaineth the Truth of the Jewish Dispensation, the Sincerity of the ancient Patriarchs and Prophets, and the vigilant Care the divine Goodness hath always had over the State of Religion, and toward the Welfare of Mankind; never leaving it destitute of some immediate Revelations from himself. It had a peculiar Aptitude to convert the Jews, who were possessed with a full Persuasion concerning the Veracity and Sanctity of their ancient Prophets; and could not therefore doubt concerning the Truth of that, which appeared conformable to that which they had foretold should be declared, and dispensed for their Benefit. This Probation also hath this Advantage, that it singly taken doth suffice to convince; whereas others can hardly do it otherwise than in conjunction with one another, and especially with its aid: For the Goodness of the Doctrine may be contested in some Points, and however good it seem, it may be imputed to human Invention: Strange Effects may be deemed producible by other Causes beside divine Power; and they may be suffered to be done for other Ends than for Confirmation of Truth; they are also commonly transient, and thence most liable to doubt: Providence also is in many Cases so mysterious, and unsearchable, that the incredulous will never allow any Inferences to be drawn from it: But the plain Correspondence of Events to the standing Records of ancient Prophecies (obvious, and conspicuous to every one that will consult and compare them) concerning a Person to be sent by God, who should have such Circumstances, and be so Qualified; who should in God's Name preach such Doctrines, and perform such Works, is a Proof which alone may assure any Man, that such a Person doth come from God, and is in what he declareth or doth approve by him: No Counterfeiting here can find Place; no Evasion can be devised from the Force of this Proof.

This

This way therefore of Discourse our Lord and his *Apostles* (whose Business it was by the most proper and effectual Methods to subdue the Reasons of Men to the *distance of faith*, and entertainment of Christian Truth) did especially use; as *St. Luke* in respect to all things concerning our Lord, so particularly in regard to his *Passion*; declaring it to happen punctually according to what had been foreseen by *St. Luke*, and thence foreshewed by his Prophets, rightly understood; *He took the twelve* (saith *St. Luke* of our Lord) *and said unto them; behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the Prophets concerning the Son of man shall be accomplished; for he shall be delivered unto the Gentiles, and shall be mocked, and spitefully entreated, and spitted on; and they shall scourge him, and put him to death. And* again, after his Resurrection, he thus reproves his Disciples; *O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the Prophets have spoken; ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?* They did not then (partly being blinded with Prejudice, partly not having used due Industry, and perhaps not excelling in natural Capacity, however not yet being sufficiently enlightened by divine Grace) apprehend, or discern, that according to the prophetic Instructions our Lord was to suffer; but afterward, when he had opened their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures, they did see, and specially urge this Point: Then *St. Peter* declared, that the Spirit of Christ, which was in the Prophets did testify beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow; then it was their manner to reason (as is said of *St. Paul*) out of the Scriptures, opening, and alledging, that Christ must needs have suffered; saying none other things, than those, which the Prophets and Moses did say should come, that Christ should suffer; delivering first of all, that Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures: This is that which in my Text *St. Peter* doth insist upon, affirming about the Passion of Christ, that it not only had been predicted by one, or more, but foreshewed by an universal Consent of all the Prophets; to illustrate and confirm which Assertion of his, is the Scope of our present Discourse: to perform which, after having briefly touched the State of the Matter in hand, we shall apply our selves.

That the *Messias* was to come in an humble and homely Manner (without Appearance of worldly Splendour, or Grandeur) that he was to converse among Men in a State of external Poverty, and Meanness; that he was to cause Offences, and find Oppositions in his Proceedings; that he was to be repulsed and rejected, to be hated and scorned, to be disgracefully and harshly treated, to be grievously persecuted and afflicted; yea that at last he was to be prosecuted, condemned and executed as a Malefactor, is a Truth indeed, which the Jews (although they firmly believed, and earnestly expected the coming of a *Messias*) did not, and indeed were hardly capable to entertain. It was a Point repugnant to the whole Frame of their Conceits; yea, inconsistent with the Nature and Drift of their Religion, as they did understand it; for their Religion in its Surface (deeper than which their gross Fancy could not penetrate) did represent earthly Wealth, Dignity and Prosperity, as things most highly valuable; did propound them as very proper, if not as the sole Rewards of Piety and Obedience; did imply consequently the Possession of them to be certain Arguments of the divine Good-will, and Regard. They could not therefore but esteem Poverty, Affliction and Disgrace as Curses from Heaven, and plain Indications of God's Disfavour toward those on whom they fell: They particularly are said to have conceited, that to be rich was a needful Qualification for a Prophet (no less needful, than to be of a good Complexion; of a good Capacity, of a good Conversation and Life) *Spiritus Dei non requiescit super pauperem*, The Spirit of God doth not rest upon a poor Man; (that is, no special Communications of Grace, or of Wisdom and Goodness, are by God ever afforded to Persons of a low and afflicted Condition) being a *Maxim* which they had framed, and which currently passed among them: That he therefore, who was designed to be so notable a Prophet; who was to have the Honour of being so special an Instrument of promoting God's Service and Glory; who therefore should be so highly favoured by God, that he should appear despicable, and undergo great Afflictions, was a Notion that could not but seem very absurd; that could not otherwise than be very abominable to them. They had farther (in congruity to these Prejudices, abated by that extreme self-love, and self-flattery, which were peculiar to that Nation) raised in themselves a strong Opinion, that the *Messias* was to come in a great visible State and Power; to achieve Deeds of mighty Prowels

Prowess and Renown ; to bring the Nations of the World into Subjection under him ; and so to reign among them in huge Majesty and Prosperity ; when *Jesus* therefore (however otherwise answerable in his Circumstances, Qualifications and Performances, to the prophetic Characters of the *Messias*) did first appear such as he did, with some Pretences, or Intimations rather, that he was the *Messias*, their Stomach presently rose at it ; they were exceedingly scandalized at him ; they deemed him not only a *Mad-man* (one possessed or distracted) and an *Impostour*, but a *Blasphemer* ; for no less than Blasphemy they took it to be for so mean and pitiful a Wretch (as to their Eyes he seemed) to assume unto himself so high a Dignity, and so near a Relation unto God, as being the *Messias* did import : We even see the Disciples themselves of our Lord so deeply imbued with this national Prejudice, that, even after they had avowed him for the *Christ*, they could scarce with Patience hear him foretelling what grievous things should befall him : St. *Peter* himself, upon that Occasion, even just after he seriously confessed him to be the *Christ*, did, as it is expressed, *take him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord* : Yea, presently after that our Lord most plainly had described his sufferings to them, they could not forbear dreaming of a Kingdom, and of being *Grandees* therein ; yea farther, even after our Lord's Passion and Resurrection, this Fancy still possessed them ; for even then they demanded of him, whether he would *at that time restore the Kingdom unto Israel* ; meaning such an external visible Kingdom. Matt. 16. 22;
17. 12;
John 16. 12;
Matt. 20. 21,
25.
Acts 1. 6.

Hence of all things, notifying the *Messias*, this seemeth to be the only Particular, which in general the *Jews* did not, or would not see, and acknowledge ; and this caused them to oversee all other glorious Marks, how clearly soever shining in, and about the Person of *Jesus* : This Cloud hindred them from discerning the Excellency of his Doctrine, from regarding the Sanctity of his Life, from being duly affected with the Wonderfulness of his Works ; from minding, or from crediting all the Testimonies from Heaven ministred unto him ; this, as St. *Paul* telleth us, was the main *Scandal* which obstructed their embracing the Gospel. As it was their Ignorance or Errour in this Point, which disposed them to persecute our Lord (*nisi enim ignoratus nihil pati posset*, as *Tertullian* saith ; *if they had known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory*, saith St. *Paul*) so it was that, which maintained their obstinate Hatred of his Name and Memory ; although graced with so illustrious Testimonies of divine Power and Providence. 1 Cor. 1. 23.
Acts 13. 27.
3. 17.
John 15. 21.
Tert. in Marc.
3. 6.
2 Cor. 2. 8.

We cannot therefore here, as in other particulars concerning our Lord, alledge the general Consent of God's People in expounding the Prophets according to our Sense, this being one of those Points, in respect to which the Prophets themselves did foresee, and foretel their perverse Stupidity, and Incredulity ; that *they should look, and not see ; hear, and not understand* ; yielding herein special Occasion to that Complaint, *Who hath believed our report ?* Yet notwithstanding their affected and culpable blindness, there is no particular concerning the *Messias* in the ancient *Scriptures*, either more frequently in way of mystical Insinuation and Adumbration, glanced at, or more clearly, in direct and plain Language expressed ; or which also by reasonable deduction thence may be more strongly inferred than this. Vid. Tert. ibid.
Isa. 6. 9.
Matt. 13. 13.
Ezek. 12. 2.
Acts 28. 26.
Isa. 53. 1.

1. I say, *First*, It is frequently glanced at by mystical Insinuations ; for explaining the intent of which Assertion, we shall premise somewhat, which may serve to declare the Pertinency of many Citations produced out of the *ancient Scripture* in the *New Testament* ; the which, together with others connected with them, or bearing just Analogy to them, we also, being assured of their Design by the Authority of our Lord and his *Apostles*, may safely presume after them to apply to the same Purposes.

We may then consider, that the All-wise God, (who *worketh all things after the counsel of his own will*, and to whom *all things are present*) having before eternal times (as St. *Paul* speaketh) determined in due time to send the *Messias*, for accomplishing the greatest Design that ever was to be managed in this World (that which should bring the highest Glory to himself, and procure the richest Benefits to the Principal of his Creatures here) did by his incomprehensible Providence so order things, that all the special Dispensations preceding it should have a fit Tendency, and an advantageous Reference thereto ; so that, when it came upon the Stage, it might appear that the Main of the Plot consisted therein ; and that whatever was acted before, had principally a Respect thereto : As therefore from the Beginning of

Euseb. Hist.

1. 3.

Psal. 105. 15.

Isa. 45. 1.

Heb. 8. 6.

Gal. 3. 13.

Nah. 9. 27.

Acts 7. 45.

Euseb. Hist.

1. 14.

Heb. 8. 5.

Exod. 25. 40.

Rom. 5. 14.

Vid. Euseb. ib.

Heb. 8. 5.

Οἱ τινες ὑποδείγματι ἢ σκιᾷ λατρεύ-
ουσι τοῖς ἐπιθεωροῦσι.Jer. 30. 9. Hof. 3. 5. Ezek. 34.
23, 24. 37. 24, 25.

(Heb. 5. 8.

10. 1. 9. 23.

Gal. 4. 24.

Col. 2. 17.)

1 Cor. 10. 11, 6

1 Pet. 1. 12.

Things God did in a gradual Method make real Preparations towards it, by several steps imparting Discoveries of his Mind about it, or in order thereto, (somewhat to Adam himself, more to Abraham and the Patriarchs, somewhat farther to Moses, much more yet to divers of the Prophets, among his chosen People, who not only foretold largely concerning it, but delivered divers kinds of Instruction conformable to it, and conducive to the promoting and entertainment thereof) so he did also take especial care by many apposite Representations (*νοητὰ θεωρήματα*, intelligible Spectacles, or Objects of mental Speculation, Eusebius calleth them) handsomely inserted into all his Dispensations, to set it out, and to insinuate his Meaning about it; that so it might at length shew it self with more Solemnity, and less Surprise: The most eminent Persons therefore, whom he raised up, and employed in his Affairs, tending to that end, as they did resemble the *Messias*, in being Instruments of God's particular Grace and Providence (being indeed inferior *Christs*, and Mediatours, partial Saviours, and Redeemers of his People, as they are sometimes called) so they were ordered in several Circumstances of their Persons, in divers Actions they performed, in the principal Accidents befalling them, to represent him (becoming *εικονικοὶ χειροὶ*, *Christs in Image*, as Eusebius again stileth them:) The Rites also and Services of Religion instituted by them in God's Name, were adapted to the same Purpose; they and all things about them, by God's especial Direction and wise Care, being fitted so as to be congruous Emblems and Shadows prefiguring *Christ*, and whatever appertained to him: Thus was Adam (as St. Paul calleth him) a Type of *Christ*; and Abel, Melchisedec, Isaac, Moses, Joshua, David, Solomon, Zorobabel are intimated to have been such; the most signal Things done by them or befalling them, having been suited to an-

swer somewhat remarkable concerning him; so that we may say of them all, as the Apostle to the Hebrews did of the Jewish Priests, they served to the subindication, and shewing of heavenly Things. In David particularly this Relation is so plain, that because thereof, in the Prophets Jeremy, Ezekiel and Hosea, the *Messias* is called by his Name; as if he were revived in the *Messias*. It indeed well suited the Dignity of this

great Personage, and the Importance of his Business, that he should have appointed so notable Heralds and Harbingers to go before his Face; furnished with conspicuous Ensigns and Badges denoting their Relation to him. It was proper, that God should appear to have had always an express Regard toward him: It consequently doth serve to our Edification; for that we duly comparing Things, and espying this admirable Correspondency, may be instructed thereby, and established in our Faith; may be excited to the admiration of God's Wisdom, so harmoniously connecting Things, and of his Goodness, so provident for our Welfare; may also be induced thereby the more highly to adore the *Messias*, and to esteem his Design: Such Uses St. Paul signifieth, when having compared divers Things concerning Moses to Things concerning *Christ*, he saith; All these Things happened as Types, and they were written for our Admonition, on whom the ends of the World are come.

It is also (both for Illustration, and Proof of these Things) to be observed, That because those eminent Servants of God were Representatives of *Christ*, many Things are spoken of them, as such; many Things are ascribed to them; which only, or chiefly were intended of him; their Names are used as Veils to cover divers Things concerning him, which it seemed to divine Wisdom not so convenient in a more open and clear manner to disclose promiscuously to all Men. That this Observation is true; that, I say, under the Names of Persons representing *Christ* (or of Things, we may add, adumbrating his Things) many Things are intimated principally concerning him, and his Dispensations, may be collected, and confirmed from hence, that many Things are attributed to Persons (and to Things also) which do not agree to them; many Things were promised, which appear never accomplished, except after an improper and hyperbolical manner of Expression, or according to an enormous wideness of Interpretation; such as do not well seem to suit the nature of true Histories, and serious Promises: Thus, for instance, many Things are foretold concerning the large Extent, and prosperous State of the Jewish Church; which History and Experience do testify never (according

Isa. 25. 8.

ding to strictness of literal acceptation, yea not in any tolerable degree, near the height of what the Words import) to have come to pass: Thus also (as the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews* argueth) Effects are attributed to the *Jewish* Rites and Sacrifices, Heb. 10. 4; which according to the nature of Things cannot belong to them, otherwise than as Substitutes, and Shadows of Things more high in Substance, and Efficacy: Thus also what is with solemn Oath promised to *Solomon* (concerning the vast Extent Psal. 45. 72; and endless Duration of his Empire in Righteousness, Peace and Prosperity; together with his mighty Acts, and successful Achievements (doth not appear directly in any competent Measure to have been accomplished: Thus also *David* (as St. *Peter* in the 2d of the *Acts* observeth, and groundeth his Argumentation on it) Acts 2. 29. speaketh divers Things of himself; which cannot be conceived properly and literally agreeable to him: Such Things therefore (having some Truth under them) are reasonably supposed to be Intimations of somewhat appertaining to the future more perfect State of Things under the *Messias*; to concern him (who was to be the end of the Law) and his Dispensation, which was to be the accomplishment of all Things predicted and prefigured: That is, that which St. *Austin* signifieth, when he saith of *Christ*, That *Him* all the Promises of the *Jewish* Nation, all their Prophecies, Priesthoods, Sacrifices, their Temple, and all their Sacraments whatever did resound, or express.

Rom. 10. 4. 2 Cor. 13. 13.
Luke 22. 37. 1 Pet. 1. 10, &c.

Quem Christum—omnia gentis illius promissa, omnes prophetiae, sacerdotia, sacrificia, templum, & cuncta omnino sacramenta sonuerunt. Aug. ad Volus. Ep. 3.

Neither are these Things only said according to Suppositions assumed in the *New Testament*; but they agree (as to their general Importance) to that Sense of the ancient *Jews*, who did conceive such mysterious References often to lie couched under the Letter of the Scriptures: They did suppose every where a *Midrash*, or mystical Sense; which they very studiously (even to an excess of Curiosity and Diligence) searched after: It was a constant and confident Opinion of their Doctors, that all Things in *Moses* his Law were typical, and capable of allegorical Exposition; and *Philo's* Writings (composed immediately after our Saviour's Time) do shew that Opinion then to have been passable. We have also several Instances and Intimations thereof in the *New Testament*: Neither is it probable, that our Lord and the *Apostles* would in their Discourses and Disputations with the *Jews*, have used this way of alledging and interpreting Passages of Scripture, if they in general had not admitted and approved it.

Why God should chuse to express Matters of this nature in such in a manner, *Vid. Chrys.* we need not to determine; it might be perhaps for Reasons only known to himself, above our Ken, or Cognizance; yet divers probable Reasons may be assigned for it, yea some more than probable, seeing they are expressed, or hinted in Scripture: It might be for a decent, and harmonious Discrimination of Times, of Dispensations, of Persons; it might be from the Depth of Things to conciliate Reverence to them, and to raise the Price of knowing them, by the Difficulty of attaining thereto; it might be by Exercise to improve the Understandings of Men, to inflame their Desire, to excite their Industry, to provoke their Devotion, to render them modest and humble; it might be for Occasion to reward an honest, and diligent Study of God's Word; and to convey special Gifts of Interpretation; it might be to conceal some Things from some Persons unworthy, or unfit to know them; especially from haughty and self-conceited Persons; it might be to use the Ignorance of some, as a Means to produce some great Events; such as was the misusing and persecuting our Lord: For such Reasons it might be, and there is no good Reason against it; for it cannot be supposed necessary, that all Things should be plainly discovered at all Times, and to all Persons; it is evident that some Things are couched in parabolical, and mysterious Expressions; it is particularly the manner of Prophetical Instruction frequently to involve Things, the full and clear Knowledge of which is not congruous to every Reason, nor suitable to every Capacity; but reserved for Times, and Persons, for which the divine Wisdom only knows them most proper.

These Things being thus premised, we come to our particular Case, and say, that (according to what our Lord, and his *Apostles* teach) the *Messias* his being to suffer was in divers Passages of the ancient Scripture prefigured: Supposing the Thing it self determined to be, there are peculiar Reasons, why it rather so, than

New

Utrique sacramentum passionis ipsius figurari in predicationibus oportuerat, quantoque incredibile, tanto magis scandalum futurum, quantoque magnificentum, tanto magis adumbrandum; ut difficultas intellectus gratiam Dei quareret. Tert. in Jud. 10.

in a more open manner, should be represented, contained in those Words of Tertullian: *The Sacrament indeed (saith he) of Christ's Passion ought to have been figured in the (ancient) predication; for as much as that the more incredible it was (if it should have been preached nakedly) the more offensive it would have been; and the more magnificent it was, the more it was to be overshadowed, that the difficulty of understanding it might be cause of*

seeking of God's Grace. Supposing it also that it should be, it is plain that the Passages about Abel, Isaac, Josias, Jeremy, and the like, may congruously be applied thereto; that the elevation of the Brazen Serpent, and the slaying the Paschal Lamb may appositely represent it; the Jewish Priests, with all their Sacrifices, may also with Reason be brought in, and accommodated thereto: These Things indeed by themselves solitarily are not apt peremptorily to evince, that it should be; yet do they handsomely suit it, and adorn the Supposition thereof; according to the Notion premised about the figurative relation between the Matters of the Old World before the Messias, and the New one after him. But with a clearer Evidence, and stronger Force we may affirm, that the Messias his Sufferings were implied in the Afflictions, ascribed to his Representative King David, such as he in several Psalms (in the 35, 69, 109, 118, and especially in the 22 Psalm) describeth them; wherein divers Passages, expressing the extreme Sadness; and Forlornness of his Condition, occur, which by the History of his Life do not so well according to the literal signification of Words, appear congruous to his Person; which therefore there is a Necessity, or at least much Reason that they should be applied to the Messias, whom that Holy King did represent.

Which being admitted, comparing the Passages we find there to that which befel Jesus, we may observe an admirable Harmony; there being scarce any Part of his Affliction in his Life, or at any Circumstance thereof at his Death, which is not in express and emphatical Terms there set out: There we have expressed his low, and despicable State (*I am a worm, and no man; the reproach of men, and despised of the people*) the causeless Hatred and Enmity of the Populacy, and of the great Ones toward him (*They that hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of my Head; they that would destroy me, being mine Enemies wrongfully, are mighty; they compassed me about with Words of Hatred, and fought against me without a Cause*) the ingrateful Requital for all the Good intended, and performed by him; (*They rewarded me evil for good, and hatred for my love*) their rejecting him (*The Stone which the Builders refused is become the Head-stone in the Corner.*) Their insidious, and calumnious Proceeding against him (*without cause have they bid for me their Net, in a Pit, which without Cause they have digged for my Soul. And, False Witnesses did rise up; they laid to my Charge Things that I knew not; and, The mouth of the wicked, and the mouth of the deceitful are opened against me; they have spoken against me with a lying Tongue.*) Their bitter insulting over him in his Affliction; (*But in mine Adversity they rejoiced, and gathered themselves together; yea the Abjects gathered themselves together against me:*) They persecute him, whom thou hast smitten, and they talk to the Grief of those, whom thou hast wounded: *καὶ ἐπὶ τὰ ἀλγῶν καὶ τραυμάτων μου προσέειπεν, and to the smart of my wounds they have added; (say the LXX.)* Their scornful, reviling, flouting, and mocking him; (*All they that see me, laugh me to scorn; they shoot the Lip, they shake the Head; saying, He trusted in the Lord, that he should deliver him, let him deliver him, seeing he delighteth in him. And, I became a reproach unto them; when they looked upon me, they shook their Heads; they opened their Mouth wide against me, and said, Aha, aha, our Eye hath seen it. ἐπείρασάν με, ἐξεμωχθήσαν μου κτηνησιμόν, ἐβρυζάν ἐπ' ἐμὲ τὰς ὀδόντας αὐτῶν they tempted me, they extremely mocked me, they gnashed their Teeth upon me.*) Their cruel and contemptuous Usage of him; (*Dogs have compassed me; the Assembly of the wicked have enclosed me; they pierced my hands, and my feet; I may tell all my Bones; they look and stare upon me.*) Their abusive Dealing with him, when he in his Distress called for some refreshment; (*They gave me Gall for my Meat, and in my Thirst they gave me Vinegar to drink.*) Their disposal of his Garments upon his Suffering (*They part my Garments among them, and cast Lots upon my Vesture.*) His being deserted of his Friends and Followers; and thence destitute of all Consolation; (*I am become a Stranger to my Brethren, and an alien unto*

my Mother's Children; — I am full of heaviness, and I looked for some to take pity, but there was none; and for Comforters, but I found none.) The Sense of God's with-holding his Favour, and Help; (My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Why art thou so far from helping me?) His charitable Disposition and De-meanour toward his Enemies and Persecutors; (But as for me, when they were sick (when they did trouble me, say the LXX.) my cloathing was Sackcloth, I humbled my self with fasting, and my Prayer returned into my own Bosom; I behaved my self as though it had been my Friend, or Brother, I bowed down heavily, as one that mourneth for his Mother.) Which Passages, and the like, how patly, and punctually they do square to respective Passages in the Gospels, I need not to shew; we do, I presume, all of us well enough remember that both most doleful and comfortable History, to be able our selves to make the Application.

But there farther are not only such oblique Intimations, or Significations of this Matter, shrowded under the Coverture of other Persons, and Names; but very direct, and immediate Predictions concerning the *Messias* his being to suffer, most clearly expressed: That whole Famous Chapter (the 53d) of *Esay*, doth most evidently and fully declare it, wherein the kind, manner, causes, ends, and consequences of his Sufferings, together with his Behaviour under them, are graphically represented: His appearing Meanness (*He hath no form; or comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty, that we should desire him:* (the disgrace, contempt, repulses, and rejection he underwent (*He is despised and rejected of men——we hid our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not,*) His afflicted State (*He is a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted,*) the bitter and painful manner of his Affliction (*He was stricken; he bare stripes; he was wounded and bruised*) his being accused, adjudged and condemned as a Malefactor (*He was taken from prison, and from judgment-----he was numbred among the transgressours*) his Death consequent (*He poured out his soul unto death; he was cut out of the Land of the living*) the design and end of his Sufferings; they were appointed, and inflicted by divine Providence for our sake, and in our stead; for the Expiation of our Sins; and our Salvation. (*It pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief-----when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin-----he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities-----the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed-----surely he hath born our griefs, and carried our sorrows -- for the transgression of my people he was smitten---the Lord hath laid on him the iniquities of us all*) his sustaining all this with a willing, quiet, humble Patience, and perfect Meekness (*He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before the shearer is dumb, so he opened not his mouth*) his charitable Praying for his Persecutors, and designing their Welfare (*He made intercession for the Transgressours*) the blessed Consequences, and happy Success of his Sufferings, in the Conversion, and Justification of Men; in performing God's Will and Work; in being satisfied, rewarded, and exalted himself (*He shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand; he shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied; by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; -----I will divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong*) which Passages as they do most exactly suit unto *Jesus*, and might in a fort constitute a true historical Narration of what he did endure; together with the Doctrines delivered in the Gospel concerning the Intents, and Effects of his Sufferings; so that they did according to the Intention of the divine Spirit, relate to the *Messias*, may from several considerations be made apparent; the context, and coherence of all this Passage with the Matters precedent and subsequent, the which plainly do respect the *Messias*, and his times, do argue it: *How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him, that bringeth good tidings?* and, *Behold my servant shall deal prudently, &c.* are passages immediately going before; to which this Chapter is knit in way of continuation; and immediately after it doth follow: *Sing, O barren, thou, that didst not bear, &c.* being a no less perspicuous, than elegant Description of the Church, enlarged by accession of the *Gentiles*, which was to be brought to pass by the *Messias*. The general Scope of this whole Prophecy enforceth the same Conclusion; and the Incongruity of this particular Prediction to any other Person imaginable beside the *Messias* doth farther evince it; so high are the things ascribed to the suffering Person;

son ; as that he should *bear the sins of all God's people, and heal them* ; that he should *by his knowledge justify many* (or the Multitude) that *the pleasure of the Lord should prosper in his hand* to these grand Purposes ; that God would *divide him a portion with the great, and that he should divide the spoil with the strong* ; the magnificency and importance of which sayings (rightly understood and weighed) do well agree to the *Messias*, but not to any other Person, or simple Man : Whence if the ancient *Jews* had reason to believe a *Messias* was to come (as they with general consent did suppose they had) they had as much Reason to apply this Place, as any other, to him, and thence to acknowledge that he was designed to be an eminent Sufferer. And indeed divers of the ancient *Targumists*, and most learned *Rabbins* did expound this Place of the one *Messias*, which was to come ; as the *Pugio fidei*, and other learned *Writers* do by several expresse Testimonies declare. This Place also discovereth the Vanity of that Figment, devised by some later *Jews* ; who to evade it, and to oppose *Jesus*, have affirmed there was to be a double *Messias* ; one, who should be much afflicted ; another, who should greatly prosper ; since we may observe, that here both great Afflictions and glorious Performances concurrently are ascribed to the same Person.

The same things are by Parts also clearly foretold in other Places of this Prophet, and in other prophetical Scriptures : By *Esay* again in the Chapter immediately preceding, *Behold* (saith God there) *my servant shall deal prudently, he shall be exalted, and extolled, and be very high* ; there is God's Servant (he, who in way of Excellency is such, that is, in the Style of this Prophet, the *Messias*) in his real glorious Capacity ; it followeth concerning his external Appearance ; *His visage was so marred more than any mans, and his form more than the sons of men* : And again, in the 49th Chapter ; *Thus saith the Lord, the redeemer of Israel, and his Holy one ; to him, whom man despiseth, to him whom the nation abhorreth, to a servant of rulers, Kings shall see, and arise, Princes also shall worship* : What can be more expresse and clear, than that it is signified here, that the *Messias*, who should subject the World, with its Sovereign Powers, to the Acknowledgment and Veneration of himself, was to be despised by Men, to be detested by the *Jewish* People, to appear in a servile, and base Condition ? The same Prophet doth again in the 50th Chapter, bring him in speaking thus : *I give my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair ; I hid not my face from shame, and spitting* : His offending the *Jews*, so as thereby to aggravate their Sins, and accelerate their Punishments, is also thus expresse by the same Prophet : *And he shall be for a sanctuary : But for a stone of stumbling, and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel, for a gin, and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem.*

The Prophet *Zachary* doth also in several Places very roundly expresse his Sufferings ; his low Condition in those Words ; *Behold thy King cometh unto thee lowly, and riding upon an Ass* ; (that is, pauper, mean and sorry to appearance.) His manner of Death in those Words : *Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts ; smite the Shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered* ; and again ; *I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem the spirit of grace, and of supplications, and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn, &c.* The Prophet *Daniel* also in that Place, from which probably the name *Messias* was taken, and which most expressly mentioneth him, saith, that *after sixty two weeks the Messias shall be cut off, but not for himself*—Now from all these Passages of Scripture (beside divers others to the same Purpose, observable by those, whose Industry is assisted by divine Illumination) we may well conclude with our Lord, *Ὁτι ἔτι προφητείας, καὶ ἔτιως ἐδεῖ παθεῖν καὶ χεῖσθαι* that thus it was written, and thus (according to the Prophets fore-shewing) it was to happen, that *Christ* should suffer ; suffer in a life of penury, and disgrace, in a death of sorrow and shame.

That it was to fall out thus, might also be well inferred, by Reasons grounded upon the Qualities of the *Messias* his Person, and upon the Nature of his Performances, such as they are described in prophetical Scripture : He was to be really, and plainly to appear a Person of most admirable Vertue and Goodness ; but never (as even *Pagan Philosophers* have observed) was, or can there be any such without undergoing the Trial of great Affliction. He was to be an Universal Pattern to Men of all sorts (especially to the greatest Part of Men, that is, to the poor and afflicted) of all *righteousness* ; to exemplify particularly the most difficult Pieces of Duty ;

Duty ; (*Humility, Patience, Meekness, Charity, Self-denial, entire Resignation* to God's Will) this he should not have had Opportunity, or Advantage of doing, should he have been high, wealthy, splendid, and prosperous in secular Matters, he was to exercise great Pity, and Sympathy toward all Mankind ; toward the doing which it was requisite that he should himself taste and feel the Inconveniencies, Troubles, Pains and Sorrows incident to us. He was to advance the repute of spiritual Goods, and eternal Blessings, depressing the Value of those Corporal and Temporal Things, which Men do so fondly admire, and dote on : The most commendable, and effectual way of doing which, was by an exemplary neglect, or rejection of worldly Glories, and Enjoyments ; refusing the Honours, Profits and Pleasures here, adjoined to a high State. He was by the most kindly, gentle and peaceable Means to erect a Spiritual Kingdom ; by pure force of Reason to subdue the Hearts and Consciences of Men to the Love, and Obedience of God ; by wise Instruction, to raise in us the Hopes of future Recompences in Heaven ; to the accomplishment of which Purposes Temporal Glory (working on the carnal Apprehensions and Affections of Men) had rather been prejudicial, Than conducive. He was to accomplish and manage his great Designs by Means Supernatural, and Divine, the which would surely become more conspicuous by the visible Meanness, and Impotency of his State. He was also most highly to merit from God, for himself, and for us (to merit God's high Approbation of what he did, God's Favour and Grace to us) this he could not perform so well, as by willingly enduring for God's-sake, and in our Behalf, the most hard and grievous things. He was in fine designed perfectly to save us ; and consequently to appease God's Wrath, to satisfy divine Justice, to expiate our Sins ; whereto it was requisite, that he should undergo what he had deserved, being punished and afflicted for us.

Vide Theodoti Orat. in Eph. 1. Cor. cil. p. 997.

Now that *Jesus* our Lord, did most thoroughly correspond to whatever is in this kind declared by the Prophets concerning the *Messias*, we need not by minutely relating the known History of his Life and Death make out any farther, since the whole Matter is palpably notorious, and no Adversary can deny it ; I shall therefore conclude, that it is a clear and certain Truth, which St. Peter in our Text affirmeth, That, *Those things which God before had shewed by the mouth of all his Prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled.*

Now, *Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our Sins in his own Blood, and hath made us Kings, and Priests unto God, and his Father ; to Him be Glory, and Dominion for ever and ever. Amen.* Apoc. 1. 5.

Blessing, and Honour, and Glory, and Power be unto him, that sitteth upon the Throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. AMEN.

SERMON XLV.

A Whit-Sunday SERMON of the Gift of the HOLY GHOST.

ACTS II. 38.

— And ye shall receive the Gift of the Holy Ghost.

AMONG the divers reasonable Grounds and Ends of the observing Festival Solemnities (such as are comforting the Poor by hospitable Relief, refreshing the weary Labourer by Cessation from ordinary Toil, maintaining Good-will among Neighbours, by chearful and free Conversation, quick-
ing

Θεοί δ' οὐκ ἐίρηνας, τὸ τῶν ἀνθρώπων
ἐπιπονεῖν πεφυκὸς γένε', ἀναπαύλας τὲ
αὐτοῖς τῶν πόνων ἐτάξατο, τῶν ἑορτῶν ἀ-
πὸ τῶν θεῶν. Plato 2. de Leg.
Legum conditores festos instituerunt
dies, ut ad hilaritatem homines publice
congererentur, tanquam necessarium labo-
ribus interponentes temperamentum.
Sen. de Tranq. an. 15.

ning our Spirits and raising our Fancies by extraordinary Re-
presentations and Divertisements, infusing and preserving good
Humour in People; such as are also the Decent conspiring in
publick Expressions of special Reverence to God, withdraw-
ing our Minds from secular Cares, and engaging them to
spiritual Meditations) the two principal Designs of them seem
to be these.

1. The affording Occasion (or rather imposing a Constraint upon us) with a
competent frequency to attend unto, to consider upon, to instruct our selves and
others in the mysterious Doctrines and Institutions of our Religion.

2. The engaging us seasonably to practise that great Duty of thankfully remem-
bring and praising God for those eminent Mercies, and Favours, which by his great
Grace and Goodness have been vouchsafed to us.

For these Purposes chiefly did God himself appoint the *Jewish* Festivals; for In-
stance the *Passover*, the Reason of which being instituted is thus expressed; *that*
Deut. 16. 3. *thou mayst remember the Day, when thou camest forth out of the land of Egypt all the*
days of thy life; which Words imply that the Observation of that Solemnity did
serve to preserve the Memory, yea the continual Remembrance of that so notable a
Blessing, which otherwise might have been totally forgotten, or seldom considered;
the same did also suggest Occasion of inquiry concerning the Reasons of its ap-
pointment, procuring consequently needful information in that material Point of
Exod. 12. 26. *their Religion*; as doth appear by those Words of God. *And it shall come to pass,*
when your Children shall say unto you, what mean ye by this Service? That ye shall say,
it is the Sacrifice of the Lord's Passover; —

Aug. de Civ.
Dei, 10. 4.

In compliance with which prudent Designs, the *Christian* Church, from her first
Infancy, hath embraced the Opportunity of recommending to her Children the
Observation of her chief holy *Festivals*, continuing the Time, and retaining the
Name, although changing or improving the Matter and Reason of those ancient
ones; the divine Providence concurring to further such proceeding, by so order-
ing the Events of Things, that the Seasons of dispensing the *Evangelical* Blessings
should fall in with those, wherein the *Legal* Benefits most resembling and represent-
ing them were commemorated; that so there might be as well a happy Co-incide-
nce of Time, as Correspondence in Matter between the ancient and new So-
lemnities; whence as the exhibition of *Evangelical* Doctrines and Mysteries did
meet with Minds more suitably prepared to entertain them, and as less Innovation
from former Usage did appear (a Thing observable to be respected in most, or
all the *positive* Institutions of our Religion) so withal *Christians* were engaged,
while they considered the greater Mercies by God vouchsafed to them, to reflect
also upon the Favours, from the same stock of Goodness, indulged by him to his
ancient People; that as those should chiefly be remembered, so these should not
wholly be forgotten: Thus did God dispose, that our *Saviour* should then suffer,
when the *Paschal Lamb* was to be offered; or that the Redemption of the World
from Sin and Misery should then be celebrated by us, when the Deliverance from
the *Egyptian* Slavery was commemorated by them: And so (that we may approach
to our Purpose) at the Time of *Pentecost*, when the *Jews* were obliged to *rejoyce*
Deut. 16. *before the Lord*, rendring Thanks unto him for the Harvest newly gathered in, and
the Earth's good Fruits (the main Supports and Comforts of this Life) were by
God's Blessing bestowed on them, then did God bountifully impart the *first Fruits* of
his *Holy Spirit*, the Food of our Souls and Refreshment of our Hearts; then did he
cause his Labourers to put their Sickle into the spiritual Harvest; converting
Souls and gathering them as mature Fruits into the Garners of the Church.

At the very Season (which is remarkable) that the *Law* was delivered to the
Jews, and the ancient *Covenant* established which did happen at *Pentecost*, as may
be probably collected from the *Text*, and is commonly supposed by the *Jewish*
Exod. 19. 1. *Doctors*, who therefore call this *Feast* שמחה חרה, the joy (or joyful Feast) of the
Law, in signification of their Joy, using then to crown their Heads with Garlands,
and strew their Houses with green Herbs, at that very time was the *Christian*
Law most signally promulged, and the *new Covenant's* Ratification most solemnly
declared by the miraculous Effusion of the Divine Spirit.

The Benefit therefore and Blessing, which at this Time we are bound especially to consider and commemorate, is in effect the Publication and Establishment of the Covenant *Evangelical*, the Foundation of all our Hopes, and all our Claims to Happiness; but more immediately and directly the Donation of the *Holy Spirit* to the *Christian Church*, and to all its Members; for the better understanding, and more truly valuing of which most excellent Benefit, let us briefly declare the Nature, and Design thereof.

Πενήκοστω ἑορτάζομεν, ὃ πνεῦμα ἐπι-
διδόν, ὃ προδεσμίαν παύλας, ὃ ἐντί-
δος συμπλήρωσιν, Sc. Naz. Ora. 44.

Almighty God, seeing the Generality of Mankind alienated from himself by gross Ignorance of its Duty toward him, and by habitual Inclinations to violate his holy Laws (originally implanted by him in our Nature, or anciently revealed to our first Parents) immersed in Error, enslaved to Vice, and obnoxious to the woful Consequences of them, severe Punishment, and extreme Misery; was pleased in his immense Goodness and Pity to design its rescue from that sad Condition; and in pursuance of that gracious Design did resolve upon Expedients the most admirable, and most efficacious that could be: For to redeem Men from the Tyranny of Sin and Hell, to reconcile them to himself, to recover them into a happy State, he sent his own only beloved Son out of his Bosom into this World, clothed with our Nature; by him, as by a *Plenipotentiary Commissioner* from himself, inviting all Men to return unto him; declaring himself by the meritorious Obedience, the expiatory Passion, the effectual Intercession of his dear Son abundantly satisfied for, and ready to grant a full Pardon of all Offences committed against him in their State of Error and Estrangement; to admit them into a State of present Indemnity and Peace, yea to settle them in perpetual Alliance and Friendship with himself: Upon most fair and gentle Terms; namely, that renouncing their erroneous Principles, and reforming their vicious course of Life, they cheerfully would embrace his merciful Overtures, and thereafter conform their Lives to his righteous Laws; the which, together with all his good Intentions concerning them, he, by the same blessed Agent, clearly discovered to them; fully by him instructing them in their Duty, and strongly encouraging them to the performance thereof by the Promise of most bountiful Rewards; his certain Love and Favour attended with endless Joy and Bliss: Thus did, as St. Paul expresseth it, *the saving Grace of God appear unto all Men, teaching us, that, denying ungodliness, and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present World, expecting that blessed Hope.* Tit. 2. 11.

But to render this wonderfully gracious Design successful, in a way of Wisdom, and reasonable Proceeding, accommodated to the Capacities of human Nature, it was requisite, that there should be provided convincing Arguments to persuade Men of the Truth and Reality of these Things (that indeed such an extraordinary Agent, with such a Message was come from Heaven) effectual Means of admonishing and exciting Men to a heedful Advertency towards them, competent Motives to a cordial acceptance of them; a Power also sufficient, notwithstanding their natural Impotency and Instability, to continue them in the Belief, to uphold them in the Practice of the Duties prescribed, in the Performance of the Conditions required.

For if it were not very credible, that God had truly those Intentions toward us, or if we did not much regard the Overture of them, or if we did not conceive the Business highly to concern us; or if resolving to comply with the *Gospel*, we yet were unable to discharge the Conditions thereof, the Design would totally be frustrated, and of it self come to nothing: To prevent which Disappointment of his merciful Intentions, Almighty God did abundantly provide, in a manner and measure suitable to the glorious Importance of them; for to the Ministry of his eternal Wisdom, he adjoined the Efficacy of his eternal Love, and blessed Spirit; the which not only conducted *God our Saviour* into his fleshly Tabernacle, and with *unmeasurable Communications* of himself did continually reside within him, but also did attend him in the conspicuous Performance of numberless miraculous Works, implying divine Power and Goodness, as exceeding not only any natural, but all created Power (such as were by mere Word and Will healing the Sick, and restoring the maimed; ejecting evil Spirits, discerning the secret Thoughts of Men, foretelling contingent Events, reviving the dead, raising himself from the Grave) which Works (some expressly, others by Parity of Reason) are ascribed

John 3. 34.

to the holy Spirit ; for, *If (saith our Lord) I by the Spirit of God cast out Devils — and, God (saith St. Peter) anointed him with the Holy Ghost, and with Power ; who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed by the Devil: And, Who (saith St. Paul) was declared to be the Son of God, according to the Holy Spirit, by the resurrection from the dead: So did God afford the most evident Attestation that could be to the Truth of our Saviour's Quality, Commission and Doctrine ; by so clear, and rowling Significations did God invite Men to take notice of these Things.*

But farther to induce them heartily to comply with these gracious Overtures, and to render them thoroughly available to the Purpose designed, the Salvation of Men, according to the Terms prescribed of Faith in God, and Obedience to his Commandments, God was pleased farther to resolve, and he faithfully did promise that he would impart the same *Blessed Spirit*, as a continual Guide and Assistance to all those, who seriously would entertain those Tenders of Mercy, sincerely resolving the Performance of the Conditions.

Now although the natural and ordinary manner of this divine Spirit's Operation (like that of all Spirits, and more subtle Substances) is not by violent and sensible Impressions, but rather in way of imperceptible Penetration, or gentle In-

sinuation of it self into the Subject upon which it worketh, hardly discovering it self otherwise than by the notable Effects resulting from it ; and although likewise the proper and principal Effects thereof, according to divine Designation, do relate to the furthering our Performance of the said Conditions requisite toward our Salvation, that is, to the cherishing

our Faith, and quickning our Obedience ; disposing Men to perform vertuous Actions, rather than to atchieve wondrous Exploits ; yet more fully to satisfy the

Doubtful, to convince the Incredulous (to confound the Ob-
stinate) World about the Truth of his Intentions, more illustriously to manifest the Completion of his Promise, more surely to fortify the Faithful against the Scandals and Temptations, which their Profession would incur, God was pleased

after our Lord's Ascension, and when the Apostolical Promulgation of the Christian Doctrine did commence, to dispense both to the Teachers and the Disciples thereof more liberal Communications of that Holy Spirit, attended with notorious, strange and wonderful Effects, apt to provoke the Admiration of Men, to persuade their Judgments, to prevail upon their Affections, to produce within them strong Desires of partaking so high a Privilege, and excellent Endowment.

The Memorial therefore of that most gracious and glorious Dispensation, the Christian Church wisely and piously hath continually preserved, obliging us at this time peculiarly to bless GOD for that incomparable and inestimable Gift, conferred then most visibly upon the Church, and still really bestowed upon every particular Member, duly incorporated thereinto.

I say bestowed upon every particular Member of the Church ; for the Evangelical Covenant doth extend to every Christian ; and a principal Ingredient thereof is the Collation of this Spirit ; which is the *Finger of God*, whereby (according to the Prophet *Jeremy's* Description of that Covenant) *God's Law is put into their inward Parts, and written in their Hearts ; inscribed (as St. Paul allusively speaketh) not with Ink, but by the Spirit of the living God ; not in Tables of Stone, but in the fleshy Tables of the Heart ; not only as the Jewish Law represented from without to the Senses, but impressed within upon the Mind and Affections ; whence God's Spirit is called the Spirit of Promise, the Donation thereof being the peculiar Promise of the Gospel ; and the End of our Saviour's Undertaking is by St. Paul declared, that we might receive the Promise of the Spirit by Faith, that is by embracing Christianity might partake thereof, according to God's Promises ; and the Apostolical Ministry or Exhibition of the Gospel is stiled the Ministration of the Spirit, and tasting of the heavenly Gift, and participation of the Holy Ghost is Part of a Christian's Character ; and the Susception of Christianity is thus described by St. Paul ; But we are bound to give Thanks always to God for you, Brethren beloved of the Lord, because God has chosen you from the beginning to Salvation, through Sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the Truth ; and our Saviour instructed Nicodemus, that no Man can enter into the Kingdom of God (that is, become a Christian or Subject of God's Spiritual King-*

1st. 12. 28.
Acts 10. 38.

Καὶ ὃ οὐ θέλει ἀπέλυσας χεῖρ
βαπτίζοντος, ἢ πνεύματος μετέχης, εἰ
ἢ μὴ πρὸς τὸ σημεῖα ποιεῖν, ἀλλ' ὅσον
ἀρκεῖ πρὸς τὸ ποιλεῖν δεδωδ, ἢ ἡκρι-
βωμένῳ λαβεῖν. Chrys. Tom. 6. Orat.
12. ad Demet.

Τῶν δὲ χαρισμάτων τῶν πνευματικῶν
τὰ μὲν ἀόρατα ὄντι ἢ πίσει καλαμαβά-
νεται μόνῃ, τὰ δὲ ἢ αἰσθητῶν ἐνδείκνυνται
σημεῖον πρὸς τὴν τῶν ἀπίστων πλανεσθῶσι-
αν. Chrys. Tom. 5. Orat. 88.

Acts 2. 12. 43.
4. 14. 9. 11.
16.

1 Co. 14. 25.

Luke 11. 20.
Jer. 31. 33.
Heb. 8. 10.
Ezek. 11. 19.
John 6. 45.
2 Cor. 3. 3.

Πνεῦμα δὲ
ἐπαγγελίας.

Eph. 1. 13.
Gal. 3. 14.

Διακονία τῶν
πνευματικῶν.

2 Cor. 3. 8.
Heb. 6. 4.

2 Thess. 2. 13.

John 3. 5.

Kingdom) without being regenerated by Water, and by the Spirit; that is, without Baptism, and the spiritual Grace attending it; according as St. Peter doth in the Words adjoining to our Text imply, that the reception of the Holy Spirit is annexed to Holy Baptism; Repent (saith he) and be baptized every one of you in the name of *A&S. 2. 38.* Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost; for the promise (that great Promise of the Holy Ghost) is unto you, and to your children; and to all that are afar off, even to as many as the Lord our God shall call; that is, the Holy Spirit is promised to all, how far soever distant in Place or Time, whoever shall be invited unto, and shall embrace the Christian Profession. St. John also maketh it to be the distinctive Mark of those, in whom Christ abideth, and who dwell in Christ, that is of all true Christians, to have this Spirit; Hereby (saith he) *1 John 3. 24.* we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us; and, Hereby we *1 John 4. 13.* know that we dwell in him and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit; and, St. Paul denieth him to be a good Christian who is destitute thereof; Now (saith *Rom. 8. 9.* he) if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his; and, Know ye not, *1 Cor. 3. 16.* saith he to the Corinthians, that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? That is, Do ye not understand this to be a common Privilege of all Christians, such as ye profess your selves to be? And the Conversion of Men to Christianity he thus expresseth; After the kindness and love of God our Saviour *Tit. 3. 4.* toward man appeared; not by any righteous works which we had done, but according to his mercy he saved us by the laver of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; And all pious Dispositions qualifying us for entrance into Heaven and Happiness (Faith, *Gal. 5. 22.* Charity, Devotion, every Grace, every Vertue) are represented to be fruits of the *Eph. 5. 9.* Holy Spirit: And, the Union of all Christians into one Body; the Catholick Society of all truly faithful People, doth, according to St. Paul, result from this one Spirit, as a common Soul animating and actuating them: For (saith he) *1 Cor. 12. 13.* by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Gentiles, whether bond or free; and have all been made to drink of one Spirit.

In fine, whatever some few Persons, or some petty Sects (as the Pelagians of old, the Socinians now) may have deemed, it hath been the Doctrine constantly, and with very general Consent delivered in the Catholick Church, that to all Persons by the holy Mystery of Baptism duly initiated to Christianity, or admitted into the Communion of Christ's Body, the Grace of God's Holy Spirit certainly is bestowed, enabling them to perform the Conditions of Piety and Vertue then undertaken by them; enlightning their Minds, rectifying their Wills, purifying their Affections, directing and assisting them in their Practice; the which Holy Gift (if not abused, ill treated, driven away, or quenched by their ill Behaviour) will perpetually be continued, improved and encreased to them; it is therefore by Tertullian (in his Prescriptions against Hereticks) reckoned as Part of that fundamental Rule, which was grounded upon the general Tradition, and Consent of the Christian Church, that Christ had sent the vertue of the Holy Ghost in his room, which *Tert. de præsc. 13.* doth all believers; to which that Article doth answer of the Apostolical Creed, in which we profess to believe the Holy Ghost; meaning, I suppose, thereby not only the bare Existence of the Holy Ghost, but also its gracious Communication and Energy.

Since therefore the collation of this eminent Gift and Favour so nearly doth concern us all; seeing it is our present Duty more especially to praise and bleſs God for it; seeing also we are wont to commensurate our Gratitude to our Estimation of the Benefit, unto which it relateth, let us a little consider the Worth and Excellency of this divine Gift conferred on us.

That it is transcendently Valuable we may in general hence collect, that even in our Lord's Esteem it did not only countervail, but in a manner surmount the Benefit of his Presence; Συμφέρει, It is (saith he) expedient (or profitable) for you *John 16. 7.* that I go away; God having designed, that my Absence shall be supplied by the Comforter's more beneficial Presence: And wonderfully beneficial surely must that Presence be, which could not only compensate, but render advantageous the Loss of that most benign and sweet Conversation, that tender and watchful Inspection, that wholesome and powerful Advice, that clear and lively Pattern of all Goodness shining forth in our Saviour's Life upon his Disciples; Could there be a more indulgent Master, a more discreet Guide, a more delightful Companion, a more faithful Friend, a mightier Protector, a surer Assistant, a sweeter Comforter than

Οὐκ ἀφ' ἑω-
 ὑμῶν ὁφθαλμοί.
 John 14. 8.
 Εὐας ὁ συντε-
 λεύας τῷ αἰῶ-
 νι.
 Matt. 28. 20.

he? Yes, it seemeth that our Saviour did apprehend, that upon some accounts those Benefits with greater Advantage might accrue to them by the Gift of his Spirit, than by his own immediate Presence; that it by internal Operation could more clearly inform the Mind, more strongly incline the Will, more vigorously affect the Heart, than any exterior Word or Example could do: Neither could our Saviour, according to the Condition of his Humanity, limited to Particularities of Time and Place, so perfectly correspond to the various Exigencies of Mankind; as that omnipotent Spirit, intimately present to, uniformly diffused through all things: Him therefore did our Saviour leave the Guardian of his otherwise Orphan Disciples; him did he substitute to undergo the Care and Tuition of them; to conduct them in the right Way, to preserve them from Dangers, to comfort them in Distresses, to manage all their Concernments, to be their Counsellour, Monitour, Advocate and Patron; by him he meant fully to make good his Word, *that he would be with them till the end of this world.*

But more distinctly to survey the many Benefits and Advantages proceeding from this excellent Gift unto us, we may observe, that on it the Foundation, the Improvement, the Completion of all our Good and Happiness do depend; that to the Holy Spirit in Truth and Justice are to be ascribed, 1. Our better State and Being. 2. Our spiritual Powers and Abilities. 3. Our good and acceptable Performances; whatever we are, whatever we can do, whatever we actually do perform as Christians.

1. We owe to the Holy Spirit our spiritual State and Being; our spiritual Life, our Freedom, our honourable Condition.

Πνεῦμα ζωο-
 ποιῶν.

1 Cor. 15. 45.
 John 6. 63.
 2 Cor. 3. 36.
 Eph. 2. 1, 5.
 1 Pet. 1. 23.

It is by virtue of this quickning Spirit that from Death and Corruption we are raised to an immortal and indefectible State of Life; that (as St. Paul saith) we *that were dead in trespasses and sins are quickened together with Christ*; we by this *incorruptible seed are born again*, not as formerly to a Life of Vanity and Misery, or to the Enjoyment of a few transitory Delights, tempered with many vexatious Inconveniencies, Pains and Troubles; but to sure Capacities of most solid and durable Contentment, *to a living hope of an incorruptible inheritance reserved in heaven for us.*

1 Pet. 1. 3, 4.

Gal. 4. 24.
 Lex os omni-
 um potuit ob-
 struere, non
 potuit mentem
 convertere.

Ambr.
 Rom. 8. 15.
 2 Tim. 2. 26.
 Eph. 2. 2.
 Rom. 8. 2.
 2 Cor. 3. 17.

It is thereby we are Free-men, enjoying a true and perfect Liberty; being enfranchised from divers intolerable Slaveries, to which we naturally are subjected, and from which otherwise we could not be exempted; from the Dominion of a rigorous Law, which prescribeth hard Duties, but doth not afford Strength to perform them; apt to condemn us, but not able to convert us; from the clamorous Accusations of a guilty Conscience, with anxious Fears of Punishment, that *spirit of bondage unto fear*, of which St. Paul speaketh; from the Tyranny of a most crafty, spiteful and cruel Enemy, that wicked one who did *captivate us at his pleasure*, and detained us under his Power; from the no less unjust, no less mischievous Domination of our own Flesh, or natural Concupiscence, imposing grievous Tasks and destructive Necessities upon us; *It is* (saith St. Paul) *the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, which setteth us free from these laws of sin and of death*; so that, *where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.*

From such base Thraldoms we thereby are redeemed, and not only so, but are advanc'd to an honourable Condition, are ennobled with illustrious Relations, are entitled to glorious Privileges: All the Benefits and Immunities contained in the Charter of the new Jerusalem, all the Advantages and Privileges appropriated to God's Court and Family thereby appertain unto us; for *we have* (saith St. Paul)

Eph. 2. 18, 19.
 Rev. 1. 6.
 1 Pet. 2. 9.

access by one Spirit unto the Father, and are thence *no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens of the Saints, and of the household of God*: By this holy unction we are consecrated *Kings and Priests unto God*; by Participation of this immortal seed, we are engrafted into Alliance with the heavenly King, become Children of God, Brethren of Christ, Heirs of Paradise (an infinitely better Paradise than that from

Rom. 8. 15.
 John 1. 13.

which we formerly were excluded;) for this is that πνεῦμα υἱοθεσίας, that Spirit which constituteth us the Sons of God, qualifying us to be so by dispositions resembling God, and filial Affections toward him; certifying us that we are so,

Gal. 4. 6.

and causing us by a free Instinct to cry *Abba Father*, running into his Bosom of Love, and flying under the Wings of his Mercy in all our Needs and Distresses; whence *as many as are led by the Spirit, they* (saith St. Paul) *are the Sons of God*; and, *the Spirit it self beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God*; yea, which

Rom. 8. 14.

Rom. 8. 16.

may seem yet a farther Pitch of Dignity, we, by Intervention of this Spirit, are united

united and incorporated into *Christ* himself, being made living Members of his Body, partaking a common Life and Sense with him ; by it we are compacted into the same spiritual Edifice, dedicated to the Worship and Inhabitation of God ; our Bodies and Souls are made Temples of his Divinity, Thrones of his Majesty, Orbs of his celestial Light, Paradises of his blissful Presence ; for, *In whom* (saith *St. Paul*) *ye are built together for an habitation of God through the Spirit* ; and, *Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you ?*

By the *Holy Spirit* we are enstated in these unconceivably glorious Privileges, and by it only we are assured of them, to our Comfort ; the Gift of it as it is a great Part of them, and the chief Cause, so it is a sure Confirmation and Pledge ; *Ye*, saith *St. Paul*, *were sealed by the Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance* ; and, *It is God who did establish us with you in Christ, and anointed us, and also sealed us, and gave the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts* ; all which Phrases do import the same thing, that is, a comfortable Assurance concerning the Reality of the Benefits by divine Grace exhibited and promised to us.

2. Neither only relatively and extrinsically is our State bettered and exalted from Death to Life, from Slavery to Freedom, from Baseness to Dignity ; but our selves answerably are changed, and amended by the same *Holy Spirit*, with a real and intrinsic Alteration, transforming us into other things, much different from what we were in our former natural State ; by that *renovation of the Holy Ghost*, of which *St. Paul* speaketh, we are (saith *he*) *renewed in the Spirit of our mind* ; so that not only the decayed Frame of our Soul is thereby repaired and reformed, but its Powers are much improved and enlarged ; we are thence endowed with new and better Faculties, as it were ; with quicker Apprehensions, with sincerer Judgments, with righter Inclinations, with nobler Passions, than we had before (yea than we could have had in our original State ;) so that in the Language of *Holy Scripture* we thence become *new men, and new creatures, created according to God in righteousness and true holiness* ; according to God, that is in conformity to the divine Perfections of Rectitude in Mind and Will, so as to resemble God in a higher Degree, and more worthy Respects than formerly. Our Father *Adam* was made *ἐν ψυχῇ ζῶσαν*, a Creature endowed with Life and Sense, furnished with Powers and Appetites disposing to acquire, preserve and enjoy the Conveniencies agreeable to that Frame ; and we naturally are *ψυχῇ ἀνθρώπου*, *animal men* : such as naturally do apprehend, do affect, do pursue things concerning this present Life ; the Pleasures of Sense, and the Satisfactions of Fancy ; Freedom from Want and Pain, Security from Danger and Disturbance, together with the Means we suppose conducive to those, Wealth, Honour and Power ; these are those *desires of the flesh and of the mind*, the things which according to our natural Temper and Frame we like and approve ; which most Men therefore do highly value, passionately love, and earnestly seek : Nor doth Nature only incline us to a Complacency in these things, but customary Fruition greatly endeareth them to us ; so that we continually improve our Acquaintance, and contract a firmer Alliance with them ; but spiritual and divine things (*the things of the Spirit of God*, as *St. Paul* calleth them) we cannot * *receive*, that is, simply of our selves, without Aid of another interior Principle, we have no Capacity to apprehend them, no Disposition to entertain them, no Strength to pursue them ; they (as the *Apostle* saith) *are foolishness to us*, that is, incongruous to our prejudicate Notions, and insipid to our corrupt Palates.

Such Doctrines as these ; that our Felicity consisteth not in affluence of temporal Enjoyments, but in dispositions of Soul crossing our Humours, curbing our Appetites, and quelling our Passions ; in conformity of Practice to Rules distastful to our Sense ; in the Love and Favour of an invisible Being ; in reversion of an Estate not to be possessed until after our Death in another World ; that none of these present things do well deserve our serious Regard, Affection or Care, and that it is blamable to be solicitous about them ; that naked Goodness (how low, weak and poor soever) is to be chosen before all the specious Poms and Glories of this World ; that the secret Testimony of Conscience is to be preferred before all the Approbation and Applause of Men ; that the Hope of future Joy should overway the Desire of present most certain and sensible Delights ; that the Loss of all things may sometime be deemed our greatest Gain, being contemned our highest Honour, enduring Afflictions our most desirable Condition, Death our surest Welfare, a Cross preferable to a Crown ; that accordingly it is often Ad-

vantageous

Eph. 2. 26.

1 Cor. 3. 16.

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advantageous and Expedient for us, and a Duty incumbent on us, willingly to discard
 our dearest Contents of Life, to sacrifice our most valued Interests, to forsake our
 nearest Relations, to refuse what we most affect, to undertake what we most
 distaste, to undergo without reluctance or regret the most bitter Accidents that
 can befall us; that we must (to use the *holy Stile*) *hate our own souls, deny our selves,*
 John 12. 25. *and take up our cross, quit houses and lands, desert kindred and friends;* *ἀποτινάσσειν*
 Luke 14. 26. *πᾶσι τοῖς ἑαυτοῦ ὑπαρξουσιν* to renounce (or bid farewell) to all that he hath, or own-
 Luke 14. 33. *eth; cut off our right hands, and pluck out our right eyes; circumcise our hearts, mor-*
 Matt. 16. 24. *tise our members; crucifie our flesh with its affections and lusts; be crucified to the world;*
 Col. 3. 5. *to account all worldly things damage, dross and dung in comparison to spiritual*
 Gal. 5. 24. *goods. That we must so far remit and restrain our self-love, as to love all Men,*
 Rom. 6. 6. *not excluding our greatest Enemies, as our selves; so as not only to part freely*
 Phil. 3. 7. 8. *with our particular Accommodations, but upon occasion, in Imitation of our Sa-*
 viour, to *lay down our lives for them;* so as not only to comport with their Infirmit-
 Matt. 6. 44. *ties, but to requite their extremest Injuries with good Will and good Turns; so as*
 to do all good to all Men, to return no evil to any; *to bless them that curse us, to*
 John 6. 60. *do good to them that hate us, to pray for them which despitefully use us, and persecute us.*
 These, and such like Dictates of the Spirit are hard, and harsh sayings, absurd
 to our natural Conceit, and abominable to our carnal Humour; we cannot readily
 swallow them, we cannot easily digest them; in respect to them we as mere Men
 Col. 1. 21. are *ἐχθροὶ τῇ διανοίᾳ, enemies in our mind, or reason;* our Discourse presently doth
 contradict and oppose them: Our Reason is shut up, and barr'd with various Ap-
 petites, Humours and Passions against such Truths, nor can we admit them into
 our Hearts, except God by his Spirit do *set open our mind,* and work a free Passage
 Διανοίαν τὴν
 Luke 24. 45. *for them into us; it is he who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, must (as*
 Acts 16. 14. *St. Paul speaketh) illustrate our hearts with the knowledge of these things; an Unction*
 2 Cor. 4. 6. *from the holy one, clearing our Eyes, softning our Hearts, healing our distempered*
 1 John 2. 27. *Faculties, must (as St. John informeth us) teach and persuade us this sort of*
 Truths; a hearty Faith of these seemingly incredible Propo-
 Eph. 2. 8. Phil. 1. 29. 1 Cor. 12. 9. *sitions must indeed be, as St. Paul calleth it, the gift of God,*
 Πνεῦμα ὁ πνεύματος.
 2 Cor. 4. 13. 1 Cor. 12. 9. *proceeding from that Spirit of Faith, whereof the same Apostle*
 Πίστις ἐκ ἐν γεωμετρικαῖς ἀνάγκαις,
 ἀλλ' ἢ τῷ πνεύματι ἐν ἐνεργείᾳ ἁγίᾳ
 νομοῦ. Bas. in Ps. 115.
 Matt. 16. 17. 1 Cor. 12. 3. *Geometrical necessities, but by the effectual operations of the Holy*
 Ghost: *Flesh and Blood will not reveal unto us, nor can any man*
 with clear Confidence say, that Jesus (the Authour, Master
 and Exemplifier of these Doctrines) *is the Lord, (the Messias, the infallible Pro-*
 phet, the universal Law-giver, the Son of the living God) *but by the Holy Ghost:*
 Every Spirit, which sincerely confesseth him to be the Christ, who hath enjoined these
 Precepts, we may with St. John safely conclude to be of God; for of our selves
 1 John 4. 2. *we are not sufficient (as the Apostle saith) λογίζεσθαι τι, to reason out, or collect any*
 2 Cor. 3. 5. *of these things; we never of our own accord, without divine Attraction should*
 come unto Christ, that is, should effectually consent unto, and embrace his Institu-
 tion, consisting of such unplaussible Propositions, and Precepts; hardly would his
 own Disciples, who had so long enjoyed the Light of his Instruction and Conver-
 sation, have admitted it, if he had not granted to them that Spirit of Truth, whose
 John 6. 44. *work it was ὁδηγᾶν, to lead them in this unknown and uncouth way, ἀναγγέλλειν, to*
 John 16. 13. *tell them again and again, that is, to instill and inculcate these crabbed Truths*
 14. 26. *upon them, ὑπομνησκέναι, to admonish, excite and urge them to the marking and*
 minding them; hardly, I say, without the Guidance of this Spirit would our Lord's
 Disciples have admitted divers Evangelical Truths, as our Lord himself told them;
 John 16. 12. *I have (said he) many things beside to say to you, but ye cannot as yet bear them; but*
 when he, the Spirit of Truth shall come, he shall conduct you into all truth.

As for the mighty Sages of the World, the learned Scribes, the subtle Dispu-
 1 Cor. 2. 2. *tters, the deep Politicians, the wise Men according to the Flesh, the Men of most re-*
 fined Judgment, and improved Reason in the World's Eye, they were more rea-
 dy to decide, than to regard, to impugn, than to admit these Doctrines; to the
 Greeks who sought Wisdom, the Preaching of them did seem Foolishness.

It is true, some few Sparks or Flashes of this divine Knowledge may possibly
 be driven out by rational Consideration; Philosophy may yield some twilight Glim-
 merings thereof; common Reason may dictate a faint Consent unto, may pro-
 duce a cold Tendency after some of these Things; but a clear Perception, and

a resolute Persuasion of Mind, that full assurance of Faith, and inflexible Confession of Hope, which the Apostle to the Hebrews speaketh of; That all riches of the full assurance of Understanding, that abundant Knowledge of the divine Will in all spiritual Wisdom and Understanding, with which St. Paul did pray that his Colossians might be replenished; these so perfect

Πληροφορία τῆ πίστεως. Heb. 10. 22.
Ὁμολογία τῆ ἐλπίδος καὶ ἀκρίβης. Heb. 10. 23.

Πᾶς πλῆτος τῆ πληροφορίας τῆ συνέσεως. Col. 2. 2. Col. 1. 9.

Illustrations of the Mind, so powerful Convictions of the Heart do argue immediate Influences from the Fountain of Life and Wisdom, the divine Spirit: No external Instruction could infuse, no interiour Discourse could excite them; could penetrate those Opacities of Ignorance, and dissipate those thick Mists of Prejudice, wherein Nature and Custom do involve us; could so thoroughly awaken the lethargick Stupidity of our Souls; could supple the refractory Stiffness of our Wills, could mollify the stony Hardness of our Hearts, could void our natural Aversion to such Things, and quell that φέρνυμα τῆ σαρκός, that carnal Mind, the which St. Paul saith is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the Law of God, Rom. 8. 7. neither indeed can be; could depress those ὑψώματα, those lofty Towers of Self-conceit, reared against the Knowledge of God, and demolish those ὀχυρώματα, those Bulwarks of Self-Will and perverse Stomach opposed against the Impressions of divine Truth; and captivate πᾶν νόημα, every Conceit and Device of ours to the Obedience of Christ, and his Discipline: Well therefore did St. Paul pray in behalf of his Ephesians, that God would bestow on them that Spirit of Wisdom and Revelation in the acknowledgment of him; and that the Eyes of their Mind (or Reason) might be enlightned, so as to know the hope of their Calling; that is, to understand and believe the Doctrines of Christianity, which upon Condition of Obedience did promise Felicity to them. Eph. 1. 17. τῆς διαύλειας.

So is the Light of spiritual Knowledge, together with a Temper of Mind, disposing to receive it, communicated to us; but farther also by the same divine Power and Spirit are our vital Heat and Vigour, our active Strength and Courage imparted. For as mere Men, we are not only blind to discern, dull to conceive, backward to undertake the necessary Duties of Vertue and Piety, but we are also dead, heartless and unwieldy, lame and impotent, indisposed and incapable to perform them: Though we should competently apprehend our Duty, and our Spirit thence should be willing, yet our Flesh, or natural Power, is weak; Matt. 26. 41. we may (as St. Paul instructeth us) in our Judgment consent that the Law is holy, just and good; and consequently to will that the Law be present to us; that is, we may be desirous, and in some Measure resolved to obey it; yea we may have some interiour rational Complacence therein; and yet not have Ability to act according to these Dictates and Desires; for to will is present to me (saith he in the Person of a Man endowed only with

Rom. 7. 12, 16. Σύμφημι τῷ νόμῳ ὅτι καλός.

Rom. 7. 18. Συνίδουμι τῷ νόμῳ καὶ τὸ ἔσω ἀνθρώπου. Rom. 7. 22.

natural Strength, abstracting from the subsidiary Virtue and Operation of the divine Spirit,) but to perform that which is good, I find not; I perceive not any means or way of affecting it; Knowledge therefore, and Willingness to do good doth not suffice; we need a prevalent Force to stir and raise this unwieldy Bulk; to overpoise our natural Propensions, to subdue the Reluctancies, and check the Importunities of Sense, to correct bad Nature, and reclaim from bad Custom: The natural Might and Policy of our single Reason, being very feeble and shallow, is not fitly matched to encounter that potent Confederacy of Enemies, which continually with open Violence doth invade and assail us; or which by clandestine Wiles doth watch to circumvent and supplant us: Is it easy for us not to dread the Frowns, nor to be charmed by the Flatteries; to slight both the Hatred and Favour; to abide the Persecutions, and to avoid the Allurements of this World; this wicked, violent, deceitful World, which is ever ready to deter from Good, and entice us to Evil? Is it easy to restrain and repress those fleshly Lusts, which (as St. Peter saith) do war against our Souls, combating them with their own Forces; using their own Faculties and Members as Weapons against them? James 4. 1. Is it easy to rescue our selves from that other Law in our Members, that warreth against the Law of our Understanding, and captivateth us to the Law of Sin? Is it a small Matter to set upon, to grapple with, to knock down that Gigantick Philistine, inordinate Self-Love (the Root of Injustice, Pride, Envy, Malice, Ambition and Avarice within us) which naturally is so tall and stout; which, if not check'd

1 Pet. 2. 11.

James 4. 1.

Rom. 7. 23.

in its Progress, will daily grow in Stature and Strength? Is it a slight Bufile
 Eph. 6. 11. detect, to counterplot, to decline or defeat those *μεθοδεύειν*, those *Devises*, or
 Eph. 6. 12. *tile Trains*, and Sleights of the Tempter; to wrestle with *Principalities*, with *Pe*
 Num. 13. 33. *with the Rulers of this darksome World*, with the spiritualities of Wickedness, surroun-
 ing us? May we not reasonably in Comparison to these mighty *Anakim* be (as
 Children of *Israel* anciently were) *in our own fight as Grasshoppers*, quite despa-
 by our own Strength to vanquish, to resist them?

In our Spiritual Conflict with such dangerous and dreadful Adversaries, we do
 Phil. 1. 19. need an *ἐπιχρησιν τῷ πνεύματι* (as St. Paul speaketh, that is) a large supply of
 the Spirit, a Collation of auxiliary Forces, an habitual Support derived from that
 invincible and infallible Spirit, which only is stronger, and wiser than they;
 Luke 24. 49. we need to be armed with that *δύναμις ἐξ ὀψης*, that power from on high, or
 (Esa. 59. 19.) heavenly Might, whereby the Apostles were enabled to fight their noble
 Battles, and to atchieve their glorious Conquests; subduing the rebellious
 Eph. 3. 16. World, and baffling the Powers of Darknes; we need *δυνάμει καὶ κραταιω-*
 Col. 1. 11. *σθῆται*, to be strengthened with Might by Christ's Spirit in the inward Man; as St. Paul
 Phil. 4. 13. expresth it; whereby, as he, we may *πάντα ἰσχύειν*, be able to do all Things, or
 John 15. 5. to accomplish the most difficult Parts of our Duty; without which we can do

2 Cor. 3. 5. Phil. 2. 13.
 Col. 1. 12.

τὸ πνεῦμα συνειλημμένον ἐν ταῖς ἀδελ-
φείαις ἡμῶν—Rom. 8. 26.

1 John 3. 9. tage over all Opposition and Difficulty. The chief Reason why we do not sin, or
 1 Pet. 1. 23. persist in a Course of Disobedience to the Laws of God, is, as St. John telleth us,
 because the divine Seed abideth in us, that Root of divine Life,
 1 Pet. 2. 4. *Θεία φύσις*.
Vis divine gratia, potentior utique
natura. Tertull.

Seed or Nature do sprout out all heavenly Graces and Vertues.

Ὁὐ γὰρ ἔστιν ἀμαρτιῶν ἀπαλλαγ-
ται ἄνευ τοῦ πνεύματος ὑπερβολῆς
 Chryl.

Πίστις, καὶ πνεῦμα, καὶ ἀγάπη
τῶν ἀγαθῶν. Chryl.
 Rom. 5. 5. Eph. 5. 9.

Gal. 5. 22. Temperance are by the same divine Apostle reckoned Streams from the same Source,
 Fruits of the same rich and goodly Stock: To it generally are attributed all Puri-
 1 Cor. 6. 11. fication of our Hearts, Mortification of our Lusts, Sanctification of our Lives, and
 consequently Salvation of our Souls: Ye (saith St. Paul) are washed, ye are sancti-
 2 Thes. 2. 13. fied, ye are justified in the Name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God;
 1 Pet. 1. 22. and, God hath chosen us from the beginning to Salvation by Sanctification of the
 Rom. 8. 13. Spirit, and Belief of the Truth; and, Having (saith St. Peter) purified our Souls
 in obedience to the Truth, by the Spirit, unto Charity unfeigned; and, If (saith St.
 Paul again) by the Spirit ye mortify the Deeds of the Flesh, ye shall live; Thus
 doth our spiritual Being and State, together with our Life and active Powers de-
 pend upon the Holy Spirit; and not only so, but

3. The continued Substance and Preservation, the actual Use and Exercise of
 them, all our discreet Conduct, all our good Practice do rely upon him: It is true
 Psal. 104. 29. of our Spiritual, no less than of our natural Life. If he doth avert his Face, we
 are troubled; if he doth substract his Influence, we die and return unto our Dust:
 Upon all Occasions we do need his Direction, Aid and Comfort; for the way of
 Jer. 10. 23. Man (as the Prophet saith) is not in himself, it is not in Man that walketh to direct
 Psal. 137. 23. his steps; It is the Lord (as the Psalmist saith) that ordereth the steps of a good
 Man, and upholdeth him with his hand; we have all need to pray with that good
 Psal. 143. 8. Man; Cause me to know the way, wherein I should walk; teach me to do thy will,
 10. for thou art my God; thy Spirit is good, lead me into the Land of Uprightness.

We are vain and uncertain in our Opinions, fickle and irresolute in our Purpo-
 ses, slow and heavy in our Proceedings; apt to faint and falter, to stumble and
 slip in all our Practice; we do need therefore this sure Oracle to consult in our
 Doubts and Darkneses; this faithful Friend to direct and advise us in our Affairs;
 this constant Monitor to rowse, and quicken us in our Undertakings; this powerful
 Guar-

Guardian to support and establish us in our Ways ; It is, in respect to good Men, this steady Hand that holdeth the Helm, and gently steereth their Course through the blind Tracts of religious Practice ; withdrawing them from those dangerous Shelves of Error and Temptation, upon which they are apt to split ; it is this heavenly Gale, that filleth their Sails with constant Resolution, and fairly driveth them forward in their Voyage toward eternal Bliss. He softly doth whisper and insinuate good Thoughts into us ; doth kindle pious Desires, doth cherish virtuous Intentions, doth promote honest Endeavours ; he seasonably checketh and restraineth us from Sin ; he faithfully reproveth and upbraideth us for committing it ; he raiseth wholsome Remorse, Shame and Displeasure for our Unworthiness and Folly ; He sweetly warmeth our cold Affections, inflaming our Hearts with Devotion toward God ; he qualifyeth us, and encourageth us to approach the Throne of Grace, breeding in us Faith and humble Confidence, prompting us fit Matter of Request, becoming our Advocate and Intercessor for the good Success of our Prayers ; *Through Christ Jesus (saith St. Paul) we have access by one Spirit unto the Father ; and, The Spirit helpeth our Infirmities ; for we know not what we should ask for as we ought, but the Spirit it self intercedeth for us.* Eph. 2. 18. Rom. 8. 26.

He guardeth us, he standeth by us, he sustaineth us in all Trials, and Temptations, affording Grace sufficient to escape or to endure them ; *not suffering us to be tempted above what we are able.* 2 Cor. 12. 2. 1 Cor. 10. 13.

He supporteth and comforteth us in our Afflictions and Distresses of all Kinds, of our inward and outward Estate : This David knew when in his Penitential Agonies he prayed, *Cast me not away from thy Presence, and take not thy holy Spirit from me ; restore unto me the Joy of thy Salvation, and uphold me with thy free Spirit ;* this those first Christians felt, who under Persecutions and all outward Discouragements were yet filled with Joy, and did walk in the comfort of the Holy Ghost ; whence that Testimony of St. Paul concerning the Thessalonians ; *Ye were followers of me, and of the Lord, receiving the Word in much Affliction with Joy of the Holy Ghost ;* by it the blessed Saints, Martyrs and Confessors being inspired, did not only with admirable Patience, but incredible Alacrity undergo the extremest Losses, Ignominies and Tortures which the spite of Hell, and rage of the World could inflict on them. Psal. 51. 12. Acts 13. 14. 9. 31, 32. 1 Thes. 1. 6.

It is in fine, this Holy Spirit, which is the sole Authour and Spring of all true Delight, of all real Content within us ; of that unspeakable Joy in believing, that gayety of Hope, that Satisfaction in well-doing ; the partaking of his Society, Influence and Consolation is indeed the most delicious Repast, and richest Cordial of our Soul ; the nearest Resemblance, the sweetest Foretaste of Paradise. 1 Pet. 1. 8. Rom. 15. 13. Heb. 3. 6.

So many, so great ; yea far more, far greater than, should the time give me leave, I could enumerate or express, are the Benefits accruing to us from this most excellent Gift of God, by him graciously conferred upon all good Christians ; for which we should correspondently endeavour with all our Hearts to praise and thank him ; in all our Lives to make grateful and worthy Returns for it ; especially by well using it to the greatest Purposes, for which it was bestowed, of enabling us to serve God, of preserving us from Sin, of conducting us to eternal Salvation.

Let us earnestly invite this Holy Guest unto us, by our Prayers unto him, who hath promised to bestow his Spirit upon those which ask it ; to impart *this living* Stream to every one, which *thirsteth* after it ; let us willingly receive him into our Hearts, let us treat him with all kind Usage, with all humble Observance. Let us not exclude him by supine Neglect, or rude Resistance ; let us not grieve him by our perverse and froward Behaviour toward him : Let us not tempt him by our fond Presumptions, or base Treacheries ; let us not quench his heavenly Light and Heat by our foul Lusts and Passions : But let us admit gladly his gentle Illapses ; let us hearken to his faithful Suggestions ; let us comply with his kindly Motions ; let us demean our selves modestly, consistently, and officiously toward him ; that we may do so, God of his infinite Mercy grant unto us, through Jesus Christ our Lord ; to whom with the same Holy Spirit for ever be all Glory and Praise. Amen. Luke 11. 33. John 7. 37, 38, 39. Acts 7. 51. Eph. 4. 30. Isa. 63. 10. Acts 5. 9. 1 Thes. 5. 19.

O God the Strength of all them that put their trust in thee, mercifully accept our Prayers ; and because through the weakness of our mortal Nature we can do no good thing without thee, grant us the help of thy grace, that in keeping of thy Commandments we may please thee both in will and deed, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

A
D E F E N C E
O F T H E
Blessed TRINITY.

TRINITY-SUNDAY, 1663.

Φύσει μὴ ἀπαιε λόγῳ σαθρὸς καὶ εὐκίνητος, καὶ διὰ τὸ ἀντιμαχόμενον λόγον ἐλδοπερίαν
ἐκ ἔχον· ὃ δὲ πᾶσι διὰ τοσούτω μάλλον, ὅσῳ μείζον τὸ ὑποκείμενον, καὶ ὃ ζήλῳ πλείων,
καὶ ὃ κίνδυνῳ χαλεπωτέρῳ· καὶ γὰρ νοῆσαι χαλεπὸν, καὶ ἐρμηνεύσαι ἀμύχανον, καὶ ἀκριβοῦς
κεκαραμμένης ὀπτιχῆς ἐργαστέρον. Greg. Naz. Orat. 26.

COL. III. 2.

Set your Affections on Things above.

Φρονέτε τὰ
ἄνω.

FOR understanding this Apostolical Precept, two Particulars must be considered; first the Act, *φρονεῖν* (which is rendred to *set our Affections*) then the Object, *τὰ ἄνω*, *things above*; these we briefly shall explain.

The Word *φρονεῖν* doth primarily, and also according to common Use, denote an Advertency, or intent Application of the Mind upon any Object: Of the Mind, that is of a Man's Soul, especially of its rational Part; so as to include the Powers of Understanding, Will, Affection, Activity; whence it may imply direction of our Understanding to know; of our Will to chuse and embrace; of our Affection to love, desire, relish; of our Activity to pursue any good (real or apparent) which is proposed: According to which most comprehensive Sense (suited the Nature of the Thing) I do take the Word, supposing that *St. Paul* doth enjoin us to employ all our mental Faculties in Study, Choice, Passion, Endeavour upon supernal Things.

The *τὰ ἄνω* (things above) may be so taken, as to import all things relating to our spiritual Life here, or our future State hereafter; the which do either actually subsist above in Heaven, or have a final Reference thither: So they may comprize,
1. The substantial Beings, to whom we stand Related, owe Respect, perform Duty. 2. The State and Condition of our spiritual Life here, or hereafter, as we are Servants and Subjects of God, Citizens of Heaven, Candidates of Immortal Happiness. 3. Rules to be observed, Qualities to be acquired, Actions to be performed, Means to be used by us in regard to the superiour Place and State,

Of these things the incomparably Principal and supreme, the *τὸ ὑπεράνω*, is the ever most Glorious and Blessed Trinity; to the minding of which this Day is peculiarly Dedicated, and the which indeed is always the most excellent, most beneficial, most comfortable Object of our Contemplation and Affection; wherefore upon it I shall now immediately fix my Discourse.

The Sacred TRINITY may be considered, either as it is in it self wrapt up in unexplicable Folds of Myſtery ; or as it hath diſcovered it ſelf operating in wonderful Methods of Grace towards us.

As it is in it ſelf, 'tis an Object too bright and dazzling for our weak Eye to ſaſten upon, an Abyſs too deep for our ſhort Reaſon to fathom ; I can only ſay, That we are ſo bound to mind it, as to exerciſe our Faith, and expreſs our Humility, in willingly believing, in ſubmiſſively adoring thoſe high Myſteries which are revealed in the Holy Oracles concerning it, by that Spirit it ſelf, *which ſearcheth the Depths of God*, and by that only Son of God, who reſiding in his Father's Boſom, hath thence brought them forth, and *expounded them* to us, ſo far as was fit for our Capacity and Uſe : And the Lectures ſo read by the Eternal *Wiſdom of God*, the Propoſitions uttered by the Mouth of *Truth it ſelf*, we are obliged with a docile Ear, and a credulous Heart, to entertain.

That there is one Divine Nature or Eſſence, common unto Three Perſons incomprehenſibly united, and ineffably diſtinguiſhed ; united in Eſſential Attributes, diſtinguiſhed by peculiar Idioms and Relations ; all equally infinite in every divine Perfection, each different from other in order and manner of Subſiſtence ; that there is a mutual Inexiſtence of one in all, and all in one ; a Communication without any Deprivation or Diminution in the Communicant ; an Eternal Generation, and an Eternal Proceſſion, without Precedence or Succeſſion, without proper Cauſality or Dependence ; a Father imparting his own, and the Son receiving his Father's Life, and a Spirit iſſuing from both, without any diviſion, or multiplication of Eſſence : Theſe are Notions which may well puzzle our Reaſon in conceiving how they agree, but ſhould not ſtagger our Faith in aſſenting that they are true ; upon which we ſhould meditate, not with hope to comprehend, but with diſpoſition to admire, veiling our Faces in the Preſence, and proſtrating our Reaſon at the Feet of Wiſdom ſo far tranſcending us.

There be thoſe, who, becauſe they cannot untie, dare to cut in ſunder theſe ſacred Knots ; who, becauſe they cannot fully conceive it, dare flatly to deny them ; who, inſtead of confeſſing their own Infirmary, do charge the plain Doctrines and Aſſertions of Holy Scripture with Impoſſibility. Others ſeem to think they can demonſtrate theſe Myſteries by Arguments grounded upon Principles of natural Light ; and expreſs it by Similitudes derived from common Experience. To repreſs the Preſumption of the former, and to reſtrain the Curioſity of the latter, the following Conſiderations (improved by your Thoughts) may perhaps ſomewhat conduce.

1. We may conſider, that our Reaſon is no competent or capable Judge concerning Propoſitions of this Nature ; *Our Breſt* (as *Minutius* ſpeaketh) *is a narrow Veſſel, that will not hold much Underſtanding* ; 'tis not ſufficient, nor was ever deſigned to ſound ſuch Depths, to deſcry the radical Principles of all Being, to reach the extreme Poſſibilities of Things. Such an intellectual Capacity is vouchſafed to us as doth ſuit to our Degree (the loweſt Rank of Intelligent Creatures) as becometh our Station in this inferiour Part of the World, as may qualify us to diſcharge the petty Buſineſſes committed to our Management, and the ſacile Duties incumbent on us : But to know what God is, how he ſubſiſteth, what he can, what he ſhould do, by our natural Perſpicacity, or by any Means we can uſe, farther than he pleaſeth to reveal, doth not ſuit to the meannefs of our Condition, or the narrowneſs of our Capacity ; theſe really are the moſt elevated Sublimities, and the abſtruſeſt Subtilties that are, or can be in the nature of Things ; he that can penetrate them, may erect his Tribunal any where in the World, and pretend juſtly that nothing in Heaven or Earth is exempted from his Judgment : But in truth, how unfit our Reaſon is to exerciſe ſuch univerſal Jurisdiction, we may diſcern by comparing it to our Senſe ; it is obvious that many Beaſts do (by advantage of a finer Senſe) ſee, hear, ſmell Things imperceptible to us ; and were it not very unreaſonable to conclude that ſuch Things do not exiſt, or are in themſelves altogether inſenſible, becauſe they do not at all appear to us ? Is it not evident, that we ought to impute their imperceptibility (reſpecting us) to the defect of our Senſe, to its dulneſs and groſſneſs, in regard to the ſubtilty of thoſe Objects ? Even ſo may Propoſitions in themſelves, and in regard to the Capacity of higher Underſtandings (for there are gradual Differences in Underſtanding, as well

as

Expositio
14. 10.
Joh. 1. 18.

John 10. 38.
14. 10.
17. 21.

Nobis ad intel-
lectum peſtus
angultum eſt,
&c. Min. F.
Tὸν μὲν δὲ πο-
τὸν, ὃ παρ-
εἶναι τὸν τῷ
πατρὶς ἐν
τῷ ἑαυτοῦ, ὃ ἐν
ἐστὶν αὐτῷ πᾶν
τὸ αὐτὸν ὡς
λέγειν. Plato
in Tim.

as in Sense) be true and very intelligible, which to our inferior Reason seem unintelligible, or repugnant to the Prenotions with which our Soul is imbrued; and our not discerning those Truths, may argue the Blindness and Weakness of our Understanding, not any Fault or Inconsistency in the Things themselves; nor should it cause us any wise to distrust them, if they come recommended to our Belief by competent Authority.

To such Purposes indeed the Holy Scripture frequently doth vilify our Reason and Knowledge: *Every Man* (saith Jeremiah) *is brutish in knowledge.* The Lord Jer. 10. 14. (saith the Psalmist) *knoweth the thoughts of Men* (of wise Men, as St. Paul quoteth it) Psal. 103. 14. *that they are vanity.* *Vain Man* (saith he in Job) *would be wise, though Man be born* 1 Cor. 3. 10. *like a wild Asses Colt;* (that is, however we affect to seem wise, yet to be dull as an Ass, to be wild as a Colt, is natural to us.) *My Thoughts* (saith God in the Prophet) *are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways: For as the Heavens are higher than the Earth, so are my ways than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.* God's Wisdom is as the Heavens, the highest and top of all Wisdom; Man's as the Earth, beneath which there is no Degree, but that of Hell and Darkness: We therefore in this respect are unfit to determine concerning Things so exceedingly sublime and subtle.

2. We may consider, That not only the imperfection of our Reason it self, but the manner of using it doth incapacitate us to judge about these Matters. Had we competent skill to sail in this deep Ocean, yet we do want a Gale to drive us, and a Compass to steer our Course by therein; we have not any firm grounds to build our Judgment on, or certain Rules to square it by. We cannot effectually discourse or determine upon any Subject, without having Principles homogeneous and pertinent thereto (that are *ἐν τῇ αὐτῇ οὐσίᾳ γενεῖα*, cognate and congruous to the Subject-Matter, as the Philosopher speaketh) upon which to found our Argumentation. Now all the Principles we can have, are either originally innate to our Minds; or afterward immediately infused by God, or by external Instruction from him disclosed to us; or acquired by our Experience, and Observation of Things incurring our Sense; or framed by our Reason, comparing those Means; of which the three former Sorts are most arbitrarily communicated, and both for number and kind depend upon the free Pleasure of him, who distributeth them according to a measure suitable to each Man's Occasions, estimated by himself: How many those are, and how far they may qualify us to judge, or discourse about those transcendent Matters, is hard to define; but most certainly they never can clash with one another; no Light in any manner imparted by God can obscure the Doctrine declared by him, no Doctrine can thwart Principles instilled by him. The latter Sorts appertain only to material and sensible Objects; which therefore can only enable us to deduce, or to examine Conclusions relating to them; and being applied to Things of another kind, are abused, so as to become apt to produce great Mistakes: As for Instance, most antient Philosophers observing, that the Changes and Vicissitudes in Nature were generally, by the same Matters, undergoing several Alterations, or putting on different Shapes; and that Bodies once being in Rest, did usually consist in that State, until by Impulse of other Bodies they were put into Motion, did thence frame such Axioms, or Principles of Discourse, *Ex nihilo nihil fit*; and *Quicquid movetur, ab alio movetur*; Which Propositions supposing them true in relation to the present Conditions and Powers of sensible Things, yet were it unlawful to stretch them unto Beings of another kind and nature (to Beings immaterial and insensible) or to infer thence generally, that in the utmost possibility of Things there is not any creative, or any self-motive Power: Even as from the like Premises it would be vain to conclude, that there be no other Beings subsistent beside those which strike our Senses, or discover themselves by sensible Effects. In like manner, it cannot be reasonable out of Principles drawn from ordinary Experience, about these most low and imperfect Things, to collect, that there can be no other kind of Unions, of Distinctions, of Generations, of Processions, than such as our own gross Sense doth represent to us: Reason it self more forcibly doth oblige us to think that to sublimer Beings there do pertain Modes of Existence and Action, Unions and Distinctions, Influences and Emanations of a more high and perfect kind, such as our coarse Apprehension

Annal. 1. 7.

Ὁς ἐκ δὲ θεοῦ
ὡς ἐμπεραστὴ μα-
τηρ.
Rom. 12. 3.

Id quod Deus
est, secundum
id quod est nec
humano ser-
mone edici,
nec humanis
auribus per-
cipi, nec hu-
manis sensibus
colligi potest.
Novat. de
Trin. cap. 7.

Ὁμοδοξαί-
σας, ὡς ἡμῖν ἐ-
φαπτόν, ἐν τῶν
ἡμετέρων τὰ
τῶ θεοῦ. Naz.
Or. 37. de Sp. S.

Cum quaritur quid tres, magna inopiā humanum laborat eloquium; dictum est tamen tres personæ, non ut illud diceretur, sed ne taceretur. Aug. de Trin. 5. 9^a

Κύριον ὄνομα τῶν τριῶν καὶ ἑσῶματόν ἐστιν. Naz. Orat. 45. (ad Evagr.)

1 Cor. 2. 13.

Πνευματικὰ πνευματικοῖς συζητεῖται

prehension cannot adequate, nor our rude Language express; which we, perhaps, have no Faculty subtle enough to conceive distinctly, nor can attain any congruous Principles, from which to discourse solidly about them: To judge of these Things, if we will not, against the Philosopher's Rule, μεταβαίνειν εἰς ἄλλο γένος, shift kinds, or use improper and impertinent Arguments, we must compare spiritual Things with spiritual, so as to draw Conclusions about Spirituals only from Principles revealed by God's Spirit, the sole Master of Spiritual Science; so also as to express them not ἐν διδασκαλίᾳ ἀνθρώπου, in Terms devised by human Wisdom, but

in such as the Holy Spirit hath suggested; for ψυχικός ἀνθρώπου, a Man endowed merely with common Sense (or natural Reason) cannot δεῖξαι, apprehend, or perceive those Things of God, which only the Spirit of God doth know. To improve and press which Consideration farther,

3. We may consider the Weakness and Shortness of our Reason, even about Things most familiar and easy to us; the little or nothing we by our utmost Diligence can attain to know concerning their intrinsic Essences, their Properties, their Causes and Manners of Production. What do we more commonly hear, than earnest Complaints from the most industrious Searchers of natural Knowledge concerning the great Obscurity of Nature, the Difficulty of finding Truth, the Blindness of our Mind, and Impotency of our Reason? And should they be silent, yet Experience plainly would speak how difficult, if not impossible, it is to arrive unto any clear and sure Knowledge of these common Objects; seeing the most sedulous Inquiries, undertaken by the choicest Wits for above two Thousand Years, have scarce perhaps exhibited one unquestionable Theorem in Natural Philosophy, one unexceptionable Maxim of Ethical Prudence or Policy; all Things being still exposed to doubt and dispute, as they were of old, when first Admiration and Curiosity did prompt Men to hunt after the Causes of Things; the most however that after all our care and toil we can perceive doth not exceed some faint Colours, some superficial Figures, some gross Effects of Things, while their radical Properties, and their immediate Causes remain inveloped, and debarred from our sight in unaccessible Darkness. Shall we then, who cannot pierce into the Nature of a Pebble, that cannot apprehend how a Mushroom doth grow, that are baffled in our Philosophy about a Gnat, or a Worm, debate and decide (beyond what is taught us from above) concerning the precise manner of Divine

Κενόδο σοι τὸ φιλότιμον ἐν ἀκινδύνοις. Greg. Naz. Or. 26.

Βρώματα ἐσθία, τὸ δὲ πῶς μερίζονται εἰς φλέμα, εἰς αἷμα, εἰς χυμὸν, εἰς χολήν, ἀγνοῶ· ταῦτα ἅπερ ἐλεπομαι καὶ ἐκείτω ἡμετέραν ἐσθίοντες ἀγνοοῦμεν, καὶ τὼν ἐσθίων τὴν δεῖν πολυπραγμονεῖμεν; Chryl. Περὶ ἀκατάληπτα. α.

* Arist. Met. 2. 1.

Sap. 9. 13.

Eccles. 7. 23.

Job 11. 7.

the farthest Recesses of Infinity? Hardly (saith the Wisdom of Solomon) do we guess aright of Things upon the Earth, and with labour do we find the Things that are before us; but the Things that are in Heaven, who hath searched out? Yea, and the genuine Solomon himself, I said, I will be wise, but it was far from me; that which is far off, and exceeding deep, who can find it out? What is more remote, what more profound, than God's Nature, who then can find it out? Sooner with our Hands may we touch the extreme Surface of the Skies, sooner with our Eyes may we pierce to the Center of the Earth: So it is expressly told to us in Job; Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty to Perfection? It is as high as Heaven, what canst thou do? Deeper than Hell, what canst thou know?

4. It may be considered, that we daily see and observe Things, which, did not manifest Experience convince us of their Being, we should be apt to disbelieve their Possibility; Sense no less than Faith doth present us with Objects, to bare Reason improbable and unconceivable; so that should we attend to the Scruples injected thereby, we should hardly take Things for possible, which we behold existent;

istent; we should distrust the greatest Evidence of Sense, and by our Logick put out our Eyes. Who would believe, that, did he not every Day see it; who can conceive how, although he seeth it, from a little, dry, ill-favoured, insipid Seed thrown into the Earth, there shortly would rise so goodly a Plant, endowed with so exact Figure, so fragrant Smell, so delicate Taste, so lively Colour; by what Engines it attracteth, by what Discretion it culleth out, by what Hands it mouldeth its proper Aliment; by what Artifice it doth elaborate the same so curiously, and incorporate it with it self? What Virtue could we imagine in Nature able to digest an earthy Juice into the pellucid clearness of Chrystal, into the invincible firmness of a Diamond? Who would not be an Infidel, did not his Sight assure him of the Miracles atchieved by that blind plastick force, which without Eye or Hand doth frame such varieties of exquisite Workmanship, inimitable, and far surpassing the skill of the greatest Artist? That a little Star, from so vast a Distance, in a Moment, should make Impression on our Eyes, replenishing with its Light or Image so spacious a Region all about it, were we blind we should hardly believe, we scarce could fancy; How, without knowing the Organs of Speech, or the manner of applying them, without any Care or Pain employed by us, we so conform our Voice, as to express what Word, what Accent we please; how we do this, or that we can do it, as it will confound our Thought to imagine, so it would stagger our Faith to believe, did not our Conscience persuade us that we can, and do speak. It is upon Occasion very commonly said, I should never have believed it, had I not seen it; and that Men speak so in earnest, many such Instances declare. Now if we can give Credit to our Sense against the Suffrage or Scruple of our Reason in Things not so distanced from our Capacity of Knowledge, shall we not much more yield our Belief unto God's express Word in Things so infinitely distant from it? If common Experience can subdue our Judgments, and compel us to a belief of Things incredible, shall our Reason demur at submitting to Divine Authority? If the Dictate of our Conscience doth convince us, shall not we much more surrender to the Testimony of God, who is greater than our Conscience, and knoweth all Things? If we do believe, because we seem to know by seeing our selves; we should rather believe, because we surely know by hearing from God: For Sense may deceive us, and often needeth Correction from Reason; God cannot deceive, and Reason often is by him corrected: Which leadeth me to a farther Consideration, That

1 John 3. 20.

5. The Propositions clearly delivered unto us by God himself, are upon many Accounts more unquestionably true, more credible than the Experiments of any Sense, or Principles of any Science: Whence if there happen to arise any seeming Contest between these, a Precedence is due to the former, in derogation to the latter; it is fit that we rather give our Eyes and our Ears, our Fancies and our Reasons the Lie, than any wise, by Diffidence to his Word, put an Affront on God; (for to disbelieve him, is, as St. John telleth us, to give him the Lie.) *τὸ μὴ εἶναι τὸ θεῷ, τὴν φροσύνην τοῦ θεοῦ, τὴν φροσύνην τοῦ θεοῦ*, the Folly of God (as St. Paul speaketh; that is, the Points of Faith declared by God, which seem most irrational, and cross to the Decrees of Human Wisdom) is *σοφώτερον ἢ τῶν ἀνθρώπων*, wiser than Men, that is, more assuredly consonant to real Truth, than our most undoubted Theorems of Science, and most current Maxims of Policy. God is the Father of all Lights, both of that which immediately shineth from Heaven, and of that which glimmereth here below; he is the Fountain of all Truth, whether natural or supernatural: But his Light and his Truth he conveyeth into us by manners different; some Light streameth directly from him, other cometh obliquely, being refracted through divers Mediums, or reflected from several Objects upon us; the first Sort must needs be more bright, and more pure, should be more powerful and efficacious upon our Minds: The latter is often blended with material Tinctures, is weakened by the Interruptions it meeteth with, loseth of its Purity and its Force by the many Conduits it passeth through, by the many Shades it mixeth with. Observations of Sense do often prove fallacious, and their not ever doing so, dependeth upon divers Conditions, a right Temper of the Organ, a fit Disposition of the Medium, a just Distance of the Object; so that Conclusions derived from them cannot be so absolutely certain, nor consequently the Principles grounded on them: But Divine

1 Joh. 5. 10.

1 Cor. 1. 25.

Reve-

*Ad cetera ex-
ercemur per
fortasse; at
cum de rebus
fidei agitur, ibi
est certè sine
fortè. Aug.*

Ἀπομν. d.

** Ἀυτοῦ δὲ
πάλιν ἀνθρώ-
πων ὑπερεώρα
ωρεῖται τὴν πα-
ρὰ τῶν θεῶν
ἐκτελέειαν.
Pfal. 94. 9.*

Revelation is not obnoxious to such Conditions; as the Doctrines revealed are in themselves simply true, according to the highest Pitch of Necessity; because the Supreme Wisdom doth conceive them, and Truth it self doth vent them; in the manner of declaring them must be competent, because God himself doth chuse, and use it; there plainly needeth no more, than yielding an attentive Ear, and Skill in the Language wherein they are expressed, to secure us from Error, and Uncertainty about them: So that well might St. *Austin* say, that *in other things our Conjecture is exercised; but Faith alone doth assure our Mind.*

There have been those, you know, who have not only advanced Doubts concerning Propositions attested to by clearest Sense, and inferr'd by strongest Discourse; but have by their argute Cavillations bid fair to shake the Foundations of all Human Science: But I never heard of any, who believed a God to be, that did contest the infallible Truth of his Oracles: *Socrates* we may be sure (his excellent Scholar assuring us) who was so incredulous, as to disclaim all Pretence to Wisdom or Science, being Author of the famous Saying, *Hoc tantum scio*; yet greatly did rely upon Divine Significations, and Testimonies, so deemed by him; and such as he could come at; alledging, that he, who followeth the Conduct of his own Reason, instead of God's Direction, chuseth a blind and ignorant Guide, before one that best seeth, and knoweth the Way: *He*, saith the * *Historian*, *despised all Humane Conceits in respect of God's Advice.*

He that formeth the Eye (saith the Psalmist) shall not he see? He that planteth the Ear, shall not he hear? He that teacheth Man Knowledge, shall not he know? He that indued us with all knowing Faculties, and presideth over us in the Management of them, shall not he supereminently know all that we can? Must not they in Reason continue subordinate to his Direction? Should they not always discern and judge under Correction by him, with an Appeal and Submission reserved to his better Judgment?

I might adjoin, That the Object and the End (as well as the Author and the Manner) of Divine Revelation, doth argue it to surpass all Reason, and all Sense, in certainty and credibility; for Sense and Reason converse wholly, or chiefly about Objects material and mutable; Revelation about immaterial and immutable Things: They direct us in Affairs concerning this Transitory Life. This leadeth us toward Eternal Felicity; to mistake about those Objects, to miscarry in those Affairs, is in it self of little, in Comparison, of no Importance: But to judge rightly about these Things, to tread safely in these Paths, is of infinitely vast Concernment; a smaller Competency therefore of Light and Certainty, might well suffice to the Purposes of Reason and Sense, but to Faith the greatest degree of Assurance is worthily due, and seemeth requisite. But farther,

John 3. 9.

6. Not only the Consideration of this Mystery, but of all the Divine Attributes, will in like manner extort from our feeble Reason the Question of *Nicodemus*, *How can these Things be?* They will all of them equally puzzle our shallow Imagination, and baffle our slender Understanding: For who can imagine, or understand how God's Immensity doth consist with his perfect Simplicity; or that without any Parts he doth co-exist to all possible Extension of Matter; being all here, and wholly there; and immensely every where? Who can apprehend his Indivisible Eternity, or how all Successions of Time are ever present to him, and subject to his View; so that he is not older now than he was when the World began, nor younger than he will be after innumerable Ages are past; so that he foreseeth the most contingent Events, depending upon Causes in their Nature arbitrary and indeterminate? Who can fancy, how out of mere Nothing, or out of extreme Confusion and Indisposedness the World could be created, and framed into so goodly Order, by a mere act of Will, or by the bare speaking of a Word? How without any Distraction of Thought he governeth Affairs, attending to the infinite Varieties of Thoughts, Words, and Actions occurring here; and

Confess. 3. 11.

ita curans universos tanquam singulos, ita singulos tanquam solos, as St. *Austin* speaketh? How he is truly said to resolve and to reverse, to love and hate, to be pleased and grieved, all without any real Change, or shadow of alteration? How he suffereth many Things to happen, which extremely displease him, and which he can easily hinder; and doth not effect many Things, which are much desired by him

him, and very feasible to his Power? Why to equal Men he distributeth his Gifts so unequally, affording to divers abundant Means of becoming Happy, leaving others destitute of them? What Wit of Man can reconcile his infinite Benignity with his most severe Decrees; or compose the seeming Differences between his Mercy and his Justice? Many such Perfections and Dispensations of God we must stedfastly believe, because they are plainly taught in Scripture; to distrust them being to renounce Christianity; to deny them being to raise up the very Foundations of our Religion: Yet he that shall with his utmost Attention of Mind endeavour to conceive how they can be, or how they consist together, according to our ordinary Notions of Things, and the vulgar Meaning of Words, applied by us to these inferiour Matters, shall find himself gruelled with innumerable semblances of Contradiction, plung'd in Depths inscrutable, involved in Labyrinths inextricable.

What in Practice the Cross of Christ was, *a scandal to Jews* (Men dull, but obstinate, and invincibly possessed by vain Prejudices) and *folly to Greeks* (Men of Wit and Subtily, but overweeningly conceited of them) that in Speculation may a great Part of Divine Truths be apt to stumble froward and arrogant Men; but as there, so here, *blessed are they who are not scandalized*; whom no fond Scruple, or haughty Conceit can pervert from readily embracing all necessary Verities; such are those we pointed at, which if without extreme Folly and Impiety we cannot reject, or be diffident of, altho' surmounting our Conceit, and dazzling our Reason; then upon the same Account, with like Facility, we must submit our Faith to the Doctrines concerning the Blessed Trinity, standing upon the same Authority.

Πλέον ἐστὶ τῷ Θεῷ Μεσικῶν ἀμέσους, ἢ πολεμικῶν ἀσεβέστευτος διαλέγεσθαι, τὰ ταῦτα ἢ δαιμόνια περὶ μαλα διασκοπεῖν ἀνθρώπου ὀνίας, οἷον ἀτέχνους τεχνιτῶν διανοίαν ὑπὸ δόξης ἢ διανοίας ἢ πρὸ εἰκὸν μελιόντας. Plut. de sera num. Vind.

7. Lastly, We may consider and meditate upon the total Incomprehensibility of God in all things belonging to him; in his Nature, his Attributes, his Decrees, his Works and Ways; which all are full of Depth, Mystery, and Wonder. God *inhabiteb q̄ws ἀπρόσιτον*, a light inaccessible to the dim and weak Sight of mortal Eyes; which *no man hath seen, or can see: No man* (as he told his Servant Moses) *can see his face* (the very exterior appearance of him) *and live*: He is a consuming fire, that will scorch, and devour such as by rash Inquiries approach too near him; *the sight* ('tis said) *of the glory of the Lord, was like devouring fire in the sight of the children of Israel*. Even those spiritual Eagles, the quick and strong-sighted Seraphims, are obliged to *cover their faces*, as not daring to look upon, nor able to sustain the Fulgour of his immediate Presence, the Flashes of Glory and Majesty *issuing from his Throne*: And the most illuminate Secretaries of Heaven, unto whom Secrets were disclosed, into which *Angels themselves were ambitious to pry*, were sometimes nonpluss'd in Contemplation of God's Attributes and Actions; being in their Astonishment forced to cry out, *ὦ βάθος*. *O the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God!* Even his Methods of exterior Providence are inscrutably Mysterious; *his judgments are ἀνεξερεύνητα*, like inexhaustible Mines, to the Bottom whereof we cannot any wise dig by our Inquiry; *his paths are ἀνεξιχνίαστοι*, so obscure as not to be traced by any Footsteps of our Discourse; *his gifts are ἀνεκδιήγητοι*, not to be interpreted, or expressed by our Language. And if all concerning God be thus incomprehensible, why should any thing seem incredible? Why out of so many unconceivable Mysteries do we chuse some, reprobate others? Wherefore do we stretch our Judgment beyond its limits to things so infinitely exceeding it? Why do we suffer our Reason to be pragmatistical, unjustly invading the Office not belonging thereto; *intruding into things which it hath not seen*, nor can comprehend; those *secret things which belong to the Lord our God*, and the Comprehension whereof he hath reserved unto himself?

Τὶ πρὸς ἔχον ἀνίπτασαι πρὸς ὃν; τί ἢ σὺ μετρεῖς τῇ χειρὶ τὸ ὕδωρ, ἢ ἔχον σπιθάμη, ἢ πᾶσαν τὴν γῆν δεξιῇ; Greg. Naz. Or. 26.
2 Cor. 9. 15.

Δόξη ἐστὶν ἀχώρητος, μεγέθει ἀκατάληπτος, ὕψει ἀσχετόνητος, σοφίᾳ ἀσυμμέτρητος, ἀγαθωσύνη ἀμίμητος, καλοποιῆς ἀνεκδιήγητος. Theoph. ad Autol.

* Μαίναν ὃς ἔγωγε εἶναι ἐχάτιον φημι φιλοεικεῖν εἶδέναι τι τιῶν ἐσόντων ἐν τῷ Θεῷ. Chryl. περὶ ἀκατάλ. α.

These Considerations may suffice in some Manner to shew, that * St. Chrysostom had reason to exclaim so much against the *madness*, as he stileth it, of those, who do *πολυπραγμονεῖν τὴν εἶπὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ*, are busily curious in speculation about the Essence of

Cogitemus si valemus, si non valemus credamus. Aug. *Serm.* 5. *de Temp.*

Τὸς ἡ τοιαύτη ὑμῶν φιλονεικία τῶν ἐφ' ἑξέσεων ὡς ἀνθρώπινη φρονήσει ὑπὲρ τῶν ἀνθρώπων νόμων ὀφείλει; Athan. T. 1. 625.

† Zeno Veronens.

may easilier incur Blame, than attain Skill by nice inquiry into them: that many of the Fathers do with great Wisdom dislike and dissuade the searching τὸ πῶς, the Manner of Things being true, or possible, as a suspicious Mark, or a dangerous Motive of Infidelity: That St. Paul's Rules, φρονεῖν εἰς τὸ σωφρονεῖν, *to be wise so as withal to be sober*, and modest; and μὴ φρονεῖν ὑπὲρ ὃ γέγραπται, *not to conceit any thing without warrant of Scripture*; are in this

Rom. 12. 3.

1 Cor. 4. 6.

1 Pet. 2. 2.
Ἐπιποθεῖν.

Job 40. 4.

Case most especially to be heeded: That, according to St. Peter's Admonition, we should, *as new born babes* (unprepossessed with any Notions or Fancies of our own) *long for, and greedily suck in the sincere milk of the word*; not diluting it with baser Liquors of human Device: That where God doth interpose his definitive Sentence, our Reason hath nothing to do but to attend and submit; no right to vote, no licence to debate the Matter; its Duty is to listen and approve whatever God speaketh, to read and subscribe to whatever he writeth; at least in any Case it should be mute, or ready to follow Job, saying, *Behold, I am vile, what shall I answer thee? I will lay my hand upon my mouth.* In fine, The Testimony of God, with a sufficient Clearness represented to the Capacity of an honest and docile Mind (void of all partial Respects, and clear from all sorts of prejudice; loving Truth, and forward to entertain it; abhorring to wrest or wrack things, to use any Fraud or Violence upon any Principle, or ground of Truth) the Testimony of God, I say, so revealed, whatever exception our shallow Reason can thrust in, should absolutely convince our Judgments, and constrain our Faith. If the Holy Scripture teacheth us plainly, and frequently doth inculcate upon us (that which also the uniform Course of Nature, and the peaceable Government of the World doth also speak) that there is but One True God; if it as manifestly doth ascribe to the Three Persons of the Blessed Trinity the same August Names, the same Peculiar Characters, the same Divine Attributes (essential to the Deity) the same superlatively admirable Operations of Creation and Providence; if it also doth prescribe to them the same supreme Honours, Services, Praises and Acknowledgments to be paid unto them all; this may be abundantly enough to satisfy our Minds, to stop our Mouths, to smother all Doubt and Dispute about this High and Holy Mystery. It was exceeding Goodness in God, that he would condescend so far to instruct us, to disclose so noble a Truth unto us, to enrich our Minds with that τὸ ὑπερέχον ἢ γνώσεως, *that most excellent knowledge of himself*; and it would be no small Ingratitude and Unworthiness in us any-wise to suspect his Word, or pervert his Meaning; any-wise to subject his Venerable Oracles to our rude Canvasses and Cavils. In fine, The proper Employment of our Mind about these Mysteries, is not to search and speculate about them, to discourse flippantly and boldly about them; but with a pious Credulity to embrace them, with all humble Respect to adore them.

I have thus endeavoured in some Measure to defend the Outworks of the Orthodox Doctrine concerning the Blessed Trinity; it was beside my intent to insist so long thereon, but the Matter did ἐφελμεται, was so attractive, that I could not wave shewing my Respect thereto.

I proceed now to that which I principally designed, the proposing briefly some practical Considerations, apt to excite us to the exercising our Understanding and Affections upon those wonderful Dispensations of Grace and Mercy, vouchsafed to us by the Holy Trinity, either conjunctly, or (as they κατ' οὐνογνωμίαν are expressed) separately.

We first should carefully Study, and duly be affected with that gracious Consent, and (as it were) Confederacy of the Glorious Three in designing and prosecuting our Good; their unanimous Agreement in uttering those three mighty Words of Favour to Mankind, *Faciamus, Redimamus, Salvemus*, Let us make Man out

out of nothing, let us recover him from Sin and Perdition, let us Crown him with Joy and Salvation ; we should with grateful Resentments, observe them conspiring to employ their Wisdom in contriving fit Means and Methods to exert their Power in effectual Accomplishment of what was requisite to the promoting of our Welfare, the Rescue of us from all Misery, the Advancing us to the highest Degree of Dignity, and Instating us in the most perfect Condition of Happiness of which our Nature is capable ; in Prosecution of that gracious Design, which their joint Goodness had projected for us. More distinctly,

1. We should set our Mind on God the Father, before the Foundation of the World from all Eternity, pleasing to forecast with himself the ~~Creation~~ of us, and Communication of his own Image to us ; endowing us with most excellent Faculties of Body and Soul ; subjecting the visible World to our Use and Governance ; placing us in a State of great Accommodation and Delight ; permitting us to fall, that he might raise us to a higher and better Condition, resolving to send his own dear Son from his Bosom to procure and purchase the Redemption of Mankind ; preparing and disposing the World for the Reception of so great a Mercy, by a general Testification of his Patience and Beneficence (*giving showers and fruitful seasons, and filling the hearts of men with food and gladness*) Acts 14. 17. but more especially by prophetic Promises, Predictions, and Prefigurations ; also suffering the generality of Mankind so to proceed in its ways, as might render it sensible of its Error and Unhappiness, of the Need and Benefit of a Deliverance ; then *in the fulness of time, when the creature did earnestly groan, and long for its recovery from vanity and slavery,* Gal. 4. 4. Rom. 8. 22. actually sending his only Son, and cloathing him with human Flesh, that conversing with us, he might discover to us his gracious Intentions toward us, might confirm the Truth thereof by Miraculous Works, might instruct us by his Heavenly Doctrine and Holy Life in our Duty, and the Terms of our Salvation, then freely delivering him over unto Death, and accepting his Passion as a Sacrifice expiating our Sins, and meriting his Favour toward us : Then raising him as *the first fruits* from the Dead, setting him at his right Hand, investing him with Authority to Govern and Save those who sincerely would believe in him, and faithfully obey him ; also sending and bestowing his Holy Spirit to dwell in them, to conduct, confirm, and comfort them in the Ways of Truth and Righteousness. These, with manifold other intercurrent Passages of gracious Providence ascribed to God the Father, we should seriously mind, and so resent, as to be ravished with Admiration of his Mercy ; to be enflamed with love of his Goodness ; to be possessed with gratitude toward him ; to become thoroughly devoted to his Service.

2. We should likewise mind the Blessed Son of GOD concurring with his Father in all his Purposes of Love and Mercy toward us, in *making all Things*, and *sustaining them by the Word of his Power* ; but especially in his (toward the freeing us from the desperate Miseries, Corruptions, and Slaveries, into which we were plunged) assuming Human Nature, leading therein a troublesome and toilsome Life, for our Benefit and Instruction ; undergoing a bitter and shameful Death, for the Atonement of our Sins, and Reconciliation of us to Divine Favour ; purchasing great and precious Promises, procuring high and glorious Privileges for us ; ascending into Heaven to prepare us Mansions of Bliss ; interceding for us with God, and pouring from above manifold Blessings upon us : The astonishing Miracles of Goodness, of Wisdom, of Condescension and Patience, displayed in the Management of which Undertakings for us, what Heart can well conceive, what Tongue can utter ? What Amazement should it produce in us to consider the brightest efflux of Divine Glory eclipsing and shrowding it self under so dark a Cloud of Mortal Frailty ; the most High stooping into the quality of so mean a Creature ; the First-born, and Heir Apparent of Heaven, descending from his Throne of Eternal Majesty, and voluntarily degrading himself into the *Form of a Servant*, clad in Rags, worn with Labour and Travel, exposed to Contempt and Disgrace ? To reflect upon the great Creator and Sovereign Lord of all the World, who reared the Heavens, and founded the Earth, who possesseth and upholdeth all Things, needing himself a Shelter, pinched with Want, taking Alms from his Slaves, and paying Tribute to his Subjects ; to contemplate the Son of God,

willingly stiling himself the *Son of Man*, really subjecting himself to the Duties, the Necessities, the Infirmities of Human Nature ; suffering the coarsest Hardships, and extremest Disasters thereof ; all this upon freest Choice, with full Contentment, and perfect Submission to so mean and so distastful a Condition.

We may observe with how admirable Goodness he did vouchsafe to converse with a froward Generation of Men, to instruct a stupid and indocile sort of People, with all Sorts of Beneficence, to oblige an Incredulous, Insensible, and Ingrateful Crew ; with how invincible a Meekness and Patience he *endured the Contradiction of Sinners* ; the scornful Reproaches, the wrongful Calumnies, the spiteful and cruel Usages of the envious and malicious World ; being to the highest Extremity despised, hated, ~~and~~ *malign*ed, and abused by those whom he had most highly honoured, most affectionately loved, and conferred the greatest Favours upon. We may with Astonishment contemplate that strange Contest between Divine Patience, and Human Wickedness, striving which of them should excel ; when we do peruse and weigh those enigmatical Passages, God accused by Man of Blasphemy, the Eternal Wisdom aspersed with Folly, Truth it self impleaded of Imposture, essential Love made guilty of Mischief, and supreme Goodness stiled a Malefactor ; Infinite Power beat down, and trampled upon by Impotent Malice ; the Judge of all the World, the Fountain of all Authority and Right, arraigned, condemned, and executed for Injustice ; the *desire of all Nations* rejected by his own Country and Kindred ; the Joy of Paradise (whose lightsome Countenance doth cheer Heaven it self) almost overwhelmed with Grief, uttering lamentable Groans, tortured with grievous Agonies ; the very Heart of God bleeding, and the sole Author of Life expiring.

We may farther study JESUS, with a hearty Compassion, and Tears gushing from his inmost Bowels, pitying not these his own Sufferings, but for the Vengeance for them due and decreed unto his Persecutors ; we would mark him excusing their Fault, and praying for their Pardon ; dying willingly for their Good, when he died violently by their Hand ; passionately desiring their Salvation, when they maliciously procured his Destruction.

We should mind all the Actions of the Son of GOD, our Saviour, with the most wise Grounds, endearing Circumstances, and precious Fruits of them ; his Birth, Life, Death, Resurrection, Ascension, Intercession ; as containing Instances of the greatest Charity and Humility possibly shewed unto us, as Arguments of the greatest Love and Gratitude due from us : Mind them we should most seriously, so as to be heartily affected with them, so as to esteem worthily the transcendent Honour done us by God assuming our Nature, and exalting us to a Conjunction with the Divine Nature ; so as to be deeply sensible of our Obligation to so immense a Charity, that could do and suffer so much for us, without any Desert of ours, yea, notwithstanding our exceedingly bad Deserts, our Rebellions and Enmities against him ; so as to detest the Heinousness of our Sins, that needed so mighty an Expiation, that caused so horrid a Tragedy ; so as not to neglect so great Salvation so frankly offered, so dearly purchased for us ; not to frustrate the Designs of so unconceivable Love and Goodness, so as to obey readily so gracious a Master, to follow carefully so admirable an Example ; so as in imitation of him, and for his Sake, to be meek, and humble in Heart, and in Deed, seeing he did so infinitely condescend and abase himself for us ; to be patient and submissive to his Will, who stooped so low, and suffered so much for us ; so as to bear a general Affection to Mankind, grounded like his, not upon any particular Interests, nor limited by any partial Respects, but extended freely, in real Desire and Intention, toward all ; liberally to impart the good Things we possess, and patiently to brook the Crosses we meet with, and heartily to forgive the Offences done to us ; for that he freely did part with the greatest Glories of Eternity, with the highest Dignities, and the richest Treasures of Heaven for our Sake ; when we were *Enemies in our Minds by wicked Works, dead in Trespasses and Sins*, guilty of numberless grievous Offences against him, by his Blood redeeming us from Wrath, reconciling us to the Mercy and Favour of God.

3. We should also meditate upon the Blessed Spirit of God, with equal Goodness conspiring, and co-operating with all the Purposes, to all the Effects of Grace, which conduce to our everlasting Happiness ; more especially as the Repairer of our

our decayed Frames, the Enliverer of our dead Souls, the Infuser of spiritual Light into our dark Minds, the Kindler of spiritual Warmth into our cold Hearts; the Raifer of spiritual Appetite to Righteousness, and the Relish of Goodness in our stupid Senses; the Imparter of spiritual Strength and Vigour to our feeble Powers; the Author of all Liberty, loosing us from Captivity under the Tyranny of Satan, from Vassalage unto our own Carnal Lusts and Passions; from Subjection to a hard and imperious Law, from Bondage to the Terrors of a guilty Conscience: As him, that enableth us to perform the Duties, and accomplish the Conditions required of us in order to our Salvation, that qualifyeth us to be the Sons of God by his effectual Grace, and assureth us that we are so by his comfortable Testimony; as our sure Guide in the ways of Truth and Virtue; ~~our faithful~~ Counsellor in all Doubts and Darkneses; our mighty Support and Succour in all Needs, in all Distresses; our ready Guard against all Assaults and Temptations; our sweet Comforter in all Sadnesses and Afflictions: Who doth insinuate good Thoughts, doth kindle holy Desires, doth cherish pious Resolutions, doth further honest Endeavours in us: Who only doth inflame our Hearts with Devotion toward God; doth encourage, doth enable us to approach unto him; doth prompt us with fit Matter of Request, and becometh Advocate for the good Success of our Prayers.

We should mind him as the Root of all good Fruits growing in us, or sprouting from us; the Producer of all good Habits formed in us, the Assister of all good Works performed by us; the Spring of all true Content that we enjoy; to whom our embracing the Faith, our continuing in Hope, our working in Charity, the Purification of our Hearts, the Mortification of our Lusts, the Sanctification of our Lives, the Salvation of our Souls are principally due, are most justly ascribed: As the Author and Preserver of so inestimable Benefits unto us, let us mind him; and withal let us consider him as condescending to be a loving Friend and constant Guest to so mean and unworthy Creatures; vouchsafing to attend over us, to converse with us, to dwell in us, rendring our Souls holy Temples of his Divinity, Royal Thrones of his Majesty, bright Orbs of his heavenly Light, pleasant Paradises of his blissful Presence; our Souls, which naturally are profane Receptacles of wicked and impure Affections, dark Cells of false and fond Imaginations, close Prisons of black and sad Thoughts: As graciously *striving with us*, striving to open and enter into our Hearts, barr'd against him by vain Conceits, and vicious Inclinations; striving to reclaim us from the Sins and Errors into which we are wont heedlessly or wilfully to precipitate our selves; striving to make us, what in all Duty and Wisdom we should be, capable of divine Favour, and fit for Everlasting Happiness: As enduring patiently manifold Displeasures and Disrespects from us; our rude Oppositions against him, our frequent Neglects of his kind Admonitions; our many perverse Humours, wanton Treacks, wilful Miscarriages, and unworthy Dealings toward him.

We should thus mind the Blessed Spirit of GOD, and be suitably affected toward him; so as to be duly sensible and thankful for those unexpressible Gifts and Blessings indulged to us by him, so as to render all Love and Reverence, all Praise and Glory, all Obedience and Service to him, especially so as to admit him cheerfully into our Hearts; yea, invite him thither by our earnest Prayers; to make fit Preparations for his Reception and Entertainment (by cleansing our Hearts from all loathsome Impurities) to make him welcome, and treat him kindly, with all civil Respect, with all humble Observance; not *grieving* and vexing him by our distastful Crossness and Peevishness, not tempting him by our fond Presumption, or base Treachery; not extinguishing his heavenly Light, and holy Fire by our foul Lusts, our damp Stupidities, our cold Neglects, our Neglects to foment and nourish them by the Food of devout Meditations and zealous Desires: So let us mind him, as to admit gladly his gentle Illapses, to delight in his most pleasant Society, to hearken to his faithful Suggestions, to comply with all his kindly Motions, to behave our selves modestly, consistently, and officiously toward him.

Thus

Thus should we employ our Mind, all the Faculties of our Soul, our Understanding, our Will, our Affections upon the Blessed Trinity, the Supreme of all Things above, the Founder of that Celestial Society, into which as Christians we are inserted; the Sovereign of that Heavenly Kingdom of which we are Subjects; the Fountain of all the Good and Happiness we can hope for in that superior State. To the Performance of which Duty there be Arguments and Inducements innumerable; 'tis the most proper and connatural Object of our Mind; that for which it is fittest, and for which it was designed; the best Intelligible, and infinitely most Amiable of all Things. 'Tis the most worthy and noble Object, the Contemplation of which, and Affection whereto, will most elevate, most enrich, most adorn, most enlarge the Capacities, and most satisfy the Appetites of our Souls: 'Tis the most sweet and pleasant Object, wherein all Light, all Beauty, all Perfection do shine; the Sight and Love of which do constitute Paradise, and beatify Heaven it self. 'Tis the most useful and beneficial Object of our Mind, which will best instruct us in what it concerneth us to know, will most incite us to those Duties which we are obliged to perform, will be most efficacious to the begetting in us those Dispositions, which are indispensibly requisite for the Attainment, and for the Enjoyment of that Everlasting Bliss; unto which that One Blessed Unity, and Glorious Trinity in its infinite Mercy bring us all: To whom be all Glory, Honour and Praise for ever. *Amen.*

F I N I S.

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O F

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